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& CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

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In Plain English

August 2012
Vol. 23 Iss. 8

 Business Tech
Protect Your Equipment

 At The Office
Promote Your Business

Home & Small Office Technology:

Laptops

Security Software



TECH SUPPORT | Troubleshooting Reference Guide

**Also Available
on MAC OS X for
the 1st Time!**



Find And Manage Duplicate Photos






Finding Duplicate Files Is As Easy As 1, 2, 3!

You may be surprised the first time you run a duplicate photo scan on your computer. The average computer may have hundreds, even thousands, of duplicate images. There are many reasons this occurs.

For example, each time you transfer new photos over from your digital camera to your computer, duplicate photos from a previous transfer session may already be saved on that same computer in a different folder.

Duplicate photos on your computer wastes space, creates a longer backup process, and becomes time consuming when you go to look for a particular file. Easy Duplicate Finder will perform a thorough scan enabling you to find and manage duplicate photos. Periodic usage of Easy Duplicate Finder will keep your computer organized and if you currently pay for a backup service, may even save you money! Plus – Easy Duplicate Finder locates many other types of duplicate files, as shown in the list to the right.

Features include:

-  Duplicate Photo Finder
-  Duplicate Song Finder
-  Duplicate Outlook Email Finder
-  Duplicate Documents Finder
-  Automated Scanning Wizard
-  Comprehensive Reports
-  Easy to Use Interface
-  Duplicate Selection Manager

Easy Duplicate Finder works with:



 **easyDuplicateFinder™**
www.easyduplicatefinder.com/smartcomputing

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Office Technology

36 Laptops

Today's laptops are sleek, powerful, and (relatively) affordable. Here's a brief overview of these portable powerhouses, along with a handy buying guide.

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Like the locks on your home and office doors, security software is a must-have. Here's what you need to know to ensure that the keys don't fall into the wrong hands.



News & Notes

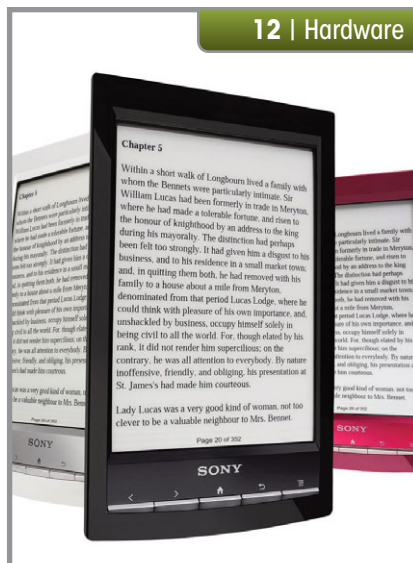
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ONLY 1&1 OFFERS YOU THE RELIABILITY OF **DUAL HOSTING**

What is Dual Hosting?

Your website hosted across multiple servers in 2 different data centers, in 2 different geographic locations.

Dual Hosting,
maximum reliability.

1&1 – get more for your website!

- ✓ **More Possibilities:**
65 Click & Build applications.
- ✓ **More Included:**
Free domain*, **free** e-mail accounts, unlimited traffic, and much more.
- ✓ **More Privacy:**
Free private domain registration.
- ✓ **More Reliability:**
Maximum reliability through hosting simultaneously across two separate data centers.



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per month

SAVE UP TO 60%!*

DOMAIN OFFERS: .COM/.ORG JUST \$ 3.99 (first year)*



www.1and1.com

* Offers valid for a limited time only. 12-month minimum contract term and 3-month pre-paid billing cycle apply for web hosting offer. Standard prices apply after the first year for domain and hosting offers. Free domain with Unlimited and Business hosting packages. Visit www.1and1.com for billing information and full promotional offer details. Program and pricing specifications and availability subject to change without notice. 1&1 and the 1&1 logo are trademarks of 1&1 Internet, all other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. © 2012 1&1 Internet. All rights reserved.

Technology News

USERS SPENDING LESS TIME ON FACEBOOK

An online poll from Ipsos conducted for Thomson Reuters found that 34% of Facebook users are spending less time on the social network than they did six months ago. On the flip side, 20% indicated they were spending more time on the website. Another key statistic was that four out of five Facebook users indicated that they had never bought a product or service based on advertising or comments that they saw on Facebook.



Facebook is still proving to be a popular social networking tool.

ANDROID TABLETS GAIN BUSINESS STANDING

Google recently released Google Maps Coordinate, a business-oriented service that utilizes Google's existing map infrastructure to allow developers to provide fleet management and location services. This is great for Google, of course: The company gains access to more customer data, which is how it makes most of its money. But it's also good news for Android tablets in general, because the service requires an Android device. And the result of that could be that we'll be seeing more companies deploying Android tablets to their workforces, rather than iPads.



HOT TWITTER TOPICS CHANGE RAPIDLY

Twitter recently released a paper titled "A Study Of 'Churn' In Tweets And Real-Time Search Queries" that examines all Twitter searches from October 2011. Twitter uses the term 'churn' because it found that, on average, around 17% of the top 1000 query terms from one hour were no longer in top 1000 during the next hour. Additionally, 13% of the top 1000 query terms from one day were not in the top 1000 for the next day. Popular news events also had a dramatic effect on the query stream. For instance, news of the death of Steve Jobs on October 5th jumped the query "steve jobs" from a negligible fraction to 15% of the total stream.



SAMSUNG SURPASSES NOKIA AS TOP MOBILE PHONE MANUFACTURER

For the first time since 1998, there's a new top dog in the global mobile phone market. Samsung passed Nokia in the first quarter of 2012 by selling a total of 92.5 million mobile phones, which accounts for around 25% of all global sales. Nokia had 22.4% market share for the first quarter. Apple accounted for 9.5% of the market share.

*Samsung passed Nokia in the first quarter of 2012 by selling a total of **92.5 million** mobile phones . . .*



● Payments made via smartphones will be more popular in the future, according to Gartner.

MOBILE PAYMENT TRANSACTIONS

Gartner forecasts that the number of mobile transactions (those made from a smartphone or other portable device) will increase 61.5% from 2011 to 2012 with a jump from \$105.9 billion in 2011 to \$171.5 in 2012. Gartner also believes that a greater number of people will begin utilizing mobile payments—jumping from 160.5 million in 2011 to 212.2 million in 2012. Looking into the future, Gartner estimates that global mobile transaction volume and value will average 42% annual growth between 2011 and 2016.

OTTERBOX IPROTECTION

OtterBox introduced a line of colorful options in its iProtection Defender Series cases for the iPad. The cases support both the New iPad and the iPad 2 and are available in five color combinations. The Hornet is yellow and black, the Deep Sea is blue and black, the Alpenglowl is pink and gray, the Crevasse is white and gray, and Sea Green is teal and gray. The case features a built-in screen protector, so you won't need to invest in anything else to protect the iPad's high-resolution display from scratches and smudges. The polycarbonate shell and foam interior helps to absorb shocks and impacts, and you'll have access to all of the features and functions of the iPad.

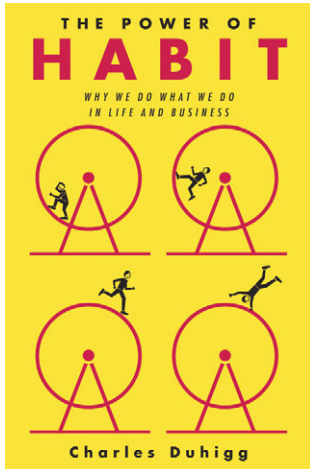
iProtection
for iPad now with
COLOR



● The new OtterBox iProtection cases both absorb shock and protect the screen.



Business News



● The Power Of Habit: how habits influence our success.

THE POWER OF HABIT

Charles Duhigg examines how human habits shape positive business behavior patterns in *The Power Of Habit*. He provides examples of how current businesses have identified and developed certain behaviors to increase profits, as well as how individuals improve themselves. Just a few of the companies and individuals examined include Procter & Gamble, Target, NFL locker rooms, Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps, and Starbucks CEO Howard Schulz. The core idea is that understanding how habits work will help you achieve success, no matter what your goal.

NEW INTELLIGENT OFFICE LOCATIONS

Intelligent Office announced that it plans to add as many as 15 new professionally-staffed, virtual office spaces in 2012. The company provides a variety of services you can purchase a la carte, including a remote receptionist, a furnished private office, and a conference room. Other professional options you can select include professional scheduling and handling of appointments, data entry, mail forwarding, and managing client account history. The newest Intelligent Office will be located in downtown Denver, Colorado, which is also where Intelligent Office has decided to locate its new headquarters. The combined business center and headquarters provides 6,000 square feet and brings the number of Intelligent Office locations in Colorado to five.



Intelligent Offices plans to add 15 new locations in 2012.



GREEN SPACES

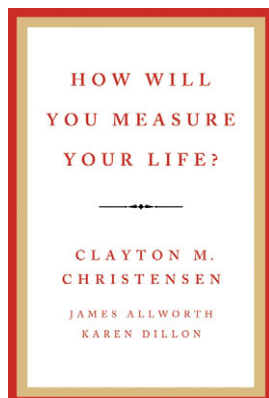
Offering locations in both New York and Colorado, Green Spaces is designed for social entrepreneurs, startups, and freelancers. The company also created the Green Leaders Global network, which brings together organizations and individuals that help to make the planet a better place. Work area services available from Green Spaces include a work space, conference room, Wi-Fi, mailbox, free coffee, and a lounge. Startups will like the starter package, which connects with other businesses and helps you launch your company. Green Spaces' EcoPrenuer's Clubhouse gives your business access to nationwide networking with other socially conscious entrepreneurs.



● Here's an example of the office space you'll find in Regus' new Maryland locations.

REGUS OPENS TWO NEW LOCATIONS IN MARYLAND

Regus has opened up two suburban business centers in Maryland to provide flexible workspaces at prestigious business locations. One is located in Columbia at 8160 Maple Lawn Blvd, and the other is in National Harbor at 137 National Plaza. Inside the business centers, you'll have access to a fully equipped office, virtual offices, meeting rooms, and an administrative staff. Similar to other Regus locations, there's no property agreement, so you can use the workspace and business services only when you need them. Regus indicated that it also plans to open more locations in Maryland later this year—in addition to the six current options.



● Clayton Christensen examines how business principles can help you to find happiness in your career and personal relationships.

HOW WILL YOU MEASURE YOUR LIFE?

This book from Clayton Christensen prompts you to consider the most important questions in your life. And rather than providing answers, *How Will You Measure Your Life?* offers to teach you how to think about your life and your purpose. Christensen's methods are based on research and theories developed at the Harvard Business School and other institutions. It covers both success and failure to help you understand how critical decisions can bring happiness or disappointment. Christensen indicates that the book won't prescribe you a set path to happiness, but is instead designed to give you tools you can use to find that path.

● SMALL BUSINESS EVENTS

Small business events give you a chance to learn critical management skills and network with professionals in related fields. Don't miss these upcoming opportunities. If you would like to see your event here, email editor@smartcomputing.com with the subject Small Business Event.

NAVY GOLD COAST CONFERENCE

San Diego, Calif. | August 6-8
www.navygoldcoast.org

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER NETWORK CONFERENCE

New Orleans, La. | Sept. 11-14
www.asbdc-us.org

ILLINOIS CHAMBER'S SMALL BUSINESS CONFERENCE & EXPO

Tinley Park, Ill. | Sept. 25th
<http://ilchamber.org>

WOMEN'S BUSINESS CONFERENCE 2012

Louisville, Ky. | Oct. 4-5
<http://nawbo.org>

THE NEW YORK ENTERPRISE REPORT SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

New York City, N.Y. | Oct. 10
www.nyreport.com/awards

SMALL BUSINESS BANKING CONFERENCE

Boca Raton, Fla. | November 7-9
www.americanbanker.com

SMALL BUSINESS EXPO

Los Angeles Calif. | Nov. 8
www.thsmallbusinessexpo.com

Small Business Resources

The Web has a trove of resources for SOHOs (small and home offices) and small businesses—if you know where to look. Find an association that can help you meet your goals; get information from the government about loans, grants, and taxes; and stay up-to-date with the best small business newsletters and blogs. If you have a pressing question, pose it on a forum to see what your peers have to say.



ASSOCIATIONS & SUPPORT

Better Business Bureau

www.bbb.org
(703) 276-0100
4200 Wilson Blvd.
STE 800
Arlington, VA 22203-1838

Main Street Alliance (MSA)

mainstreetalliance.org
info@mainstreetalliance.org
(603) 831-1835
3518 S. Edmunds St.
Seattle, WA 98118

National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB)

www.nfib.com
(800) 634-2669
(615) 872-5800
53 Century Blvd.
STE 250
Nashville, TN 37214

National Small Business Association (NSBA)

nsba.biz
(202) 293-8830
1156 15th St., STE 1100
Washington, DC 20005

SCORE

www.score.org
(800) 634-0245
(703) 487-3612
1175 Herndon Pkwy
STE 900
Herndon, VA 20170

Small Business Development Centers Network (SBDNET)

www.sbdnet.org
(800) 689-1912
501 W. Durango Blvd.
San Antonio, TX 78207



BLOGS

Signal vs. Noise

37signals.com/svn/posts

Small Business Search Marketing

www.smallbusinesssem.com

Small Biz Bee

smallbizbee.com

Small Business Trends

smallbiztrends.com

The Small Business Blog

www.sme-blog.com



The Entrepreneurial Mind

www.drjeffcornwall.com



FORUMS

Small Business Administration Community

www.sba.gov/community

The Small Business Community Forums

www.smallbusinessforums.org

Small Business Ideas Forum

www.smallbusinessbrief.com/forum

The Young Entrepreneur

www.youngentrepreneur.com/forum



GOVERNMENT

Grants.gov

House Committee On Small Business

smallbusiness.house.gov

Small Business and Self-Employed Tax Center

www.irs.gov/businesses/small

Small Business Administration (SBA)

sba.gov

U.S. Copyright Office

copyright.gov

U.S. Department of Labor

dol.gov

U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship

sbc.senate.gov

Small Business Development Centers

Assistance For Entrepreneurs

Haven't the foggiest idea how to harness your entrepreneurial spirit, pull yourself anywhere using bootstraps, or think in or out of a box? Starting and running your own business is tough, but fortunately for prospective and current small business owners, SBDCs (Small Business Development Centers; asbdc-us.org) dispense with the clichés and offer training, counseling, and other assistance to help you craft your vision into a real-world success.

Run A Small Business

Pooling resources from federal, state, and local governments, as well as the private sector and the educational community, The Association of Small Business Development Centers is truly a joint venture with a vested interest in fostering small business growth. For an overview of what the SBDC can offer you and your small business, visit bit.ly/dKYe2a. The SBA (Small Business Administration; www.sba.gov) is partnered with SBDCs.

Help On Your Turf

You may be surprised to learn that there's probably an SBDC branch nearby; there are locations in all 50 states, in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and even in the U.S. territories. There are 63 nationwide Lead Small Business Development Centers coordinating program services for every sub-center and satellite location in each state. Centers are made up of directors, full-time staff members, and various part-time staff and volunteers.

The best way to contact your nearest SBDC is to visit the Association of

Small Business Development Centers' Web site (asbdc-us.org), input your ZIP code into the Find Your Nearest Small Business Development Center text box, and then click Go. The results page will highlight Lead Centers but rank centers in order of those closest to your location. Often, SBDCs partner with universities and colleges, and tend to be found on campuses across the country. On the search results page, you'll also find a link to the local office's Web page,

Frequent Question

If you're like many other people starting a small business, funding is at the top of your mind. A common question that entrepreneurs have for SBDCs is: "Am I eligible for grant money?"

The answer depends on the nature of your business. Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) will give you a clear picture of your options before your visit to a Small Business Development Center.

email address, phone number, a fax number if available, and address.

The Closest Thing To A Free Lunch

The services offered may vary by location, but all SBDCs offer many services free of charge. Some typical services you can expect from your nearest SBDC include help with financial, marketing, production, or-

ganization, engineering, and technical problems and access to feasibility studies that can flesh out a fledgling business plan. Some SBDCs also offer affordable training seminars to help with various aspects of running a business. You can also rest assured that your business with the SBDC will remain confidential.

Women's Business Centers

The SBA offers WBCs (Women's Business Centers), which directly serve female entrepreneurs through nearly 100 educational centers nationwide. This organization strives to assist women in overcoming the hurdles they face in today's business environment by offering business management training and technical assistance to all women, with a special emphasis on economically or socially disadvantaged women. The services and training programs are also commonly offered in multiple languages to enable those who speak English as a second language or are still learning English. To find your nearest WBC, visit bit.ly/hs3st2.

Small Business, Big Payoff

Small business owners know that achieving success is about taking risks, innovating, and making tough decisions day in and day out. Thanks to the services offered at the SBA, SBDCs, and WBCs, you're not on your own. ●



A Laser Printer Work Horse

Epson WorkForce Pro WP-4530 All-In-One Printer

The WorkForce Pro WP-4530 from Epson produces automatic two-sided prints quickly. This unit supports ISO (International Organization for Standardization)-recognized print speeds of 16ppm black and 11ppm color. It's also one of the more efficient models you'll find, with a cost-per-page as low as half of what you'd pay using another color laser printer.

- Copy, scan, print, fax
- Built-in 802.11b/g/n Wi-Fi networking
- Up to 4,800 x 1,200 maximum dpi resolution
- 330-sheet paper capacity, 30-sheet automatic document feeder
- Scan images at up to 9,600 x 9,600 dpi, interpolated
- Monthly duty cycle of up to 1,600 pages
- Print wirelessly from mobile devices



Realize The Paperless Dream

Fujitsu ScanSnap S1500 Document Scanner

Going paperless isn't just a pipe dream; it can be a reality, thanks to the Fujitsu ScanSnap S1500 Document Scanner. A solid work-horse for the office or home.

- Scan business cards as small as 2 x 2 inches and documents up to 8.5 x 34 inches
- Scan directly to Evernote, Google Docs, Sharepoint, and more
- 50-page automatic document feeder, support for automatic two-sided scanning
- Scan as many as 20 pages per minute
- Automatically scans when you insert a document
- ScanSnap Connect app lets you view scans on your mobile devices
- Superior image quality thanks to Auto Color Detection, Auto Resolution, Auto Deskew, and Auto Orientation features
- One-year limited warranty



A PC & So Much More

Gateway SX2370-US10P Desktop PC

The Gateway SX2370-US10P Desktop PC has what it takes to make the most of your business applications, and enough left over to let you unwind with your choice of entertainment.

- Windows 7 Home Premium 64-bit
- 6GB of installed memory, 2TB hard drive
- 16X DVD SuperMulti Drive, and Multi-in-1 media card reader
- AMD quad-core A6-3620 accelerated processing unit; base clock speed of 2.2GHz, boostable to 2.5GHz
- Compact size: 10.08 x 3.93 x 13.86-inches (HxWxD)
- Support for 5.1-channel surround sound, ideal for movies, music, and more
- Gigabit Ethernet LAN port for quick access to files on the local network
- Includes multimedia keyboard and optical mouse



Let Them See The Real You

Logitech HD Pro Webcam C920

Any webcam will let you connect with remote employees, family, and friends, but if you want a full-HD experience, then look no further than the Logitech C920.

- Supports 1080p video calling on Skype Dual and 720p video on Windows Live Messenger, Logitech Vid HD, and others
- H.264 HD video encoding for smooth visuals and reduced loads on your PC's processor
- 20-step autofocus lens; snaps into focus quickly, can focus on images as close as 10cm
- Stereo mics pick up your voice and the voices of others in the room for realistic results
- Carl Zeiss optics for quality results in any situation
- Mounting clip with rubberized bumpers so the C920 stays where you clip it on your desktop, laptop, or tripod
- Take still shots at up to 15MP

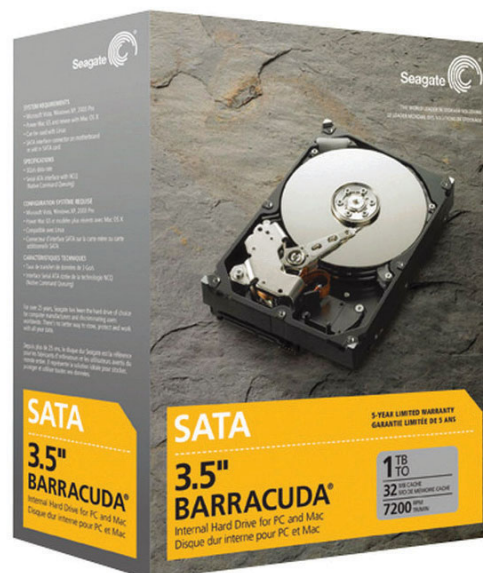


Maximize Your Internal Storage

Seagate Barracuda 1TB Internal SATA Desktop Hard Drive

When it comes to internal storage on your PC, SSDs have been stealing the show for the last several years; however, those mechanical hard drives are still the most affordable way to get decent capacity.

- 7,200RPM 1TB hard drive has enough storage to handle hundreds of thousands of songs; hundreds of movies; and countless documents, files, and programs
- 3.5-inch form factor installs in PC and Macs
- 32MB cache, fast SATA 3Gbps interface
- Perpendicular recording technology aligns data vertically on the disk for improved performance and dependability
- A fluid dynamic bearing motor delivers solid performance at a barely audible whisper
- Integrated self-monitoring technology continually verifies data security and drive performance



Bookworms Apply Here

Sony PRS-T1 Wi-Fi Touch Ereader

If you're an avid reader, it's about time you got yourself an ereader. The Sony PRS-T1 Wi-Fi Touch ereader is lightweight and diminutive, with a six-inch screen that makes it no larger than an average paperback book.

- 0.35-inch thickness—easy to hold for hours on end, perfect for toting around in a pocket or bag
- 2GB memory: store up to 1,200 ebooks or documents
- Dual built-in dictionaries and 10 translation dictionaries
- Borrow ebooks from your local library
- Wireless access to more than 2 million titles at Sony's Reader Store
- Month-long battery life, glare-free touchscreen, and dark visible text even in direct sunlight
- Take notes right on the reader
- MicroSD slot lets you add as much as 32GB of storage



Professional Grade Without The Premium

ViewSonic VP2365-LED

23-inch Display

If you're looking for a professional-grade monitor that won't cost an arm and a leg, then check out ViewSonic's VP2365-LED. As one of ViewSonic's LED Professional Series monitors, the VP2365-LED supports a wide viewing angle so you have a good view even when not positioned directly in front of the monitor.

- 23-inch monitor with a resolution of 1,920 x 1,080
- Brilliant IPS (In-Plane Switching) panel for vivid colors and high contrast ratios
- Full 1080p resolution for true HD video
- Built-in 4-port USB hub lets you connect a variety of devices
- Built with ergonomics in mind, supports pivot, height adjust, tilt, and swivel adjustments
- Eco-mode slashes energy consumption up to 40%
- Three-year limited warranty



A Storage Server For The Everyman

Western Digital

Sentinel DX4000 4TB Small-Office Server

As storage becomes more and more important to your business, the idea of having a dedicated storage server starts making sense. But you don't need a dedicated IT staff to set up a server, just get Western Digital's Sentinel DX4000.

- Easy to install, connects to your network via dual Gigabit Ethernet ports, for high-speed data access and reliable performance
- Supports automatic RAID (redundant array of independent disks) migration and capacity expansion
- USB 3.0 port for non-Ethernet data transfers
- 4TB capacity from a quartet of Western Digital enterprise-class hard drives
- Set up automatic backups for up to 25 computers on the network
- In the event of a system failure, use the easy restore function to get up and running again



No More Background Noise

Jawbone ICON

Originally developed for tank commanders and helicopter pilots, the ICON features Jawbone's NoiseAssassin 2.5 technology, which is designed to eliminate background and wind noise that can ruin your phone conversations when you're on the go.

- Connects to multiple Bluetooth devices at once; switch between work and personal calls
- Supports A2DP (Advanced Audio Distribution Profile)—listen to audio from any Bluetooth device, including music, video, driving directions, apps, and phone calls
- Places a battery meter on the status bar of BlackBerry phone or iPhone
- Includes a selection of earbuds and earloops for the most comfortable fit
- MyTalk lets you download apps and personalize settings on your ICON



From Pad To PC

Livescribe 2GB Echo Smartpen

The things you write down on paper often need to be copied to a digital document. The 2GB Echo Smartpen can capture both handwritten notes (using a built-in camera) and audio (using a built-in microphone) to let you easily transfer notes to your computer.

- Works with Livescribe's Dot Paper: write down your notes, then sync the pen with your PC to convert to text
- 2GB model stores up to 200 hours of recorded audio
- 500MB of online storage
- Connect headphones to the built-in 3.5mm audio jack or play back content through the built-in speaker
- OLED screen displays pen features, helps you navigate smartpen apps
- Micro-USB connector charges pen, lets you transfer content to PC
- Ergonomic design for comfort while writing



A Case, Keyboard & Stand

Logitech Keyboard Case For iPad 2

This keyboard and case combo is designed to fit the iPad 2 perfectly. A recess at the top of the case allows you to securely stand your iPad 2 just behind the keyboard, so you'll be able to type just as you would when using a laptop.

- Aircraft-grade aluminum exterior case
- Works in both landscape and portrait orientations
- Wireless keyboard connects via Bluetooth
- Charges through a USB connection—no need to replace batteries
- Inside corners are padded to prevent drop damage
- Exterior of the case matches the iPad 2's brushed aluminum look
- Functions as a tablet stand with full access to the keyboard



Noise-Reducing Headphones

Sony MDRNC7

These foldable headphones can reduce ambient noise by 87.4%, according to Sony, to help you hear your music and movies—even in a noisy airplane, subway, or bus.

- Reduces ambient noise by up to 87.4%
- Ideal for commuters, featuring a foldable swivel design that allows the headphones to be easily stowed
- Includes drawstring pouch to protect the headphones during travel
- Dual-jack adapter lets you connect directly to a stereo audio plug and in-flight music services
- Noise-cancelling feature powered by a single AAA battery, can be turned off when it's not needed



Go Hands Free

Jabra DRIVE

Jabra's DRIVE is a speakerphone that's designed to clip to your vehicle's sun visor and connect to your phone via Bluetooth, so you can be ready for hands-free calls within seconds.

- Connects with up two devices at a time
- Voice guidance helps you to pair DRIVE with your smartphone the first time; after that, it automatically connects to your phone whenever you get in the car
- Easy to use: when your phone rings, answer by pressing the button on the DRIVE
- 20 hours of talk time and up to 30 days of standby time
- Transmits music, podcasts, and GPS directions



An Eco-friendly UPS

Tripp Lite ECO750UPS

With a Tripp Lite ECO750UPS UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply), your electronics will be able to continue operating during power outages and disruptions.

- Gives you an extra 45 minutes during a power failure—plenty of time to shut down computers and peripherals
- Six battery backup outlets for vital electronics, plus six additional outlets that suppress electricity surges
- USB port for configuring options and system shutdown
- Eco-friendly: automatically reduces power to PC accessories when the PC is not in use
- Audible alarm and front panel LEDs that display updates for current power operation
- \$100,000 connected-equipment insurance
- Can automatically cut power to unused computer peripherals



Cut Energy Costs Using Your Surge Protector

Staples 12-Outlet 4350 Joule EcoEasy Surge Protector

With this surge protector from Staples, you can cut power to six outlets when the device plugged into the primary outlet is turned off or goes into standby mode. This will help you save money on your energy bill.

- Save up to \$40 per year over a traditional surge protector, with six devices plugged in to the master line
- Handles up to 4350 joules of energy, protects your electronics from lightning strikes and other causes of electricity surges
- Five outlets that aren't tied to the master line, for devices that you want to have on all the time
- Sliding covers for safety
- Built-in cable management to help reduce cable clutter
- Also provides ports for your coax and phone line



For Your Eyes Only

3M PF15.0

Do you work on sensitive data on your laptop? If so, you may want to invest in 3M's PF15.0 LCD privacy filter, which darkens the side-view of your screen to prevent others from reading it.

- Prevents others from reading your screen from the side
- Reduces screen glare caused by overhead lighting
- Works on 15.4-inch widescreen laptops or flat panel monitors
- Protects the screen from fingerprints and scratches
- Easy to attach and remove
- Viewed from directly in front of the screen, all content appears as crisp as it would without the filter
- 100% recyclable

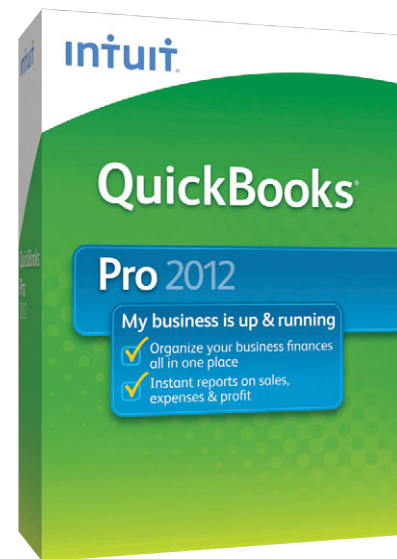


Featured-Filled Finance Software

Intuit QuickBooks Pro 2012

With QuickBooks Pro 2012, Intuit provides a slew of new features that allow you to better track invoices and bills, as well as to customize QuickBooks Pro to your office.

- New Lead Center lets you track and follow leads within QuickBooks Pro
- New Calendar feature includes a to-do list that displays invoices, billing, and past transactions
- Export reports into Excel
- New Document Center provides you with a location to attach receipts, estimates, and other customer files for quick reference at tax time
- Process and select when to run memorized transactions
- Access industry-specific report templates



Legal Forms For Your State

Nolo Quicken Legal Business Pro 2012

This software is designed to provide the legal forms you'll need when starting a business. Quicken Legal Business Pro 2012 has also been updated to meet the most current laws and regulations of your state.

- Includes more than 140 contracts, forms, and worksheets
- Helps you decide the best business structure
- Identifies deductions allowed by the IRS, including long-term business assets and retirement funds
- Explains how to obtain licenses and permits, how to buy or sell a franchise
- Explains how to develop smart personnel policies and how to effectively communicate with employees
- Five searchable Nolo business bestsellers
- Discover the legal and tax issues that arise when borrowing money for your business



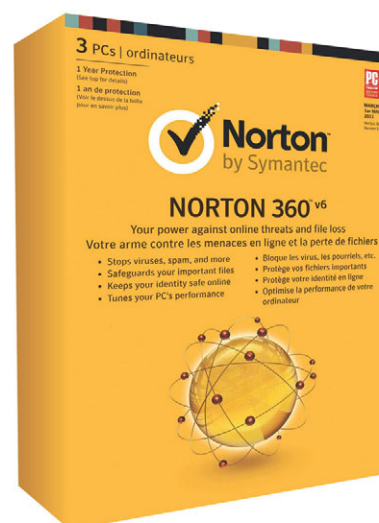
Comprehensive Protection

Symantec Norton 360

\$89.99 (1 year for up to three PCs)
us.norton.com/360

Norton 360 Version 6.0 from Symantec provides you with a suite of security utilities that you can control from a single interface.

- Fixes infected computers—even some that won't boot
- Real-time protection when emailing, surfing the Web, and chatting with friends online
- Firewall blocks online attacks
- Norton Protection System offers multiple layers of proactive threat protection to block online threats
- Provides 2GB of online storage for file backup
- Alerts you to websites that could be unsafe
- Tune-up utility finds and corrects problems
- Lets you shop and bank online with confidence



Learn A New Language

Rosetta Stone Spanish (Latin America) Level 1

\$179
www.rosettastone.com

With Rosetta Stone's software, you'll be able to learn a language anytime and anywhere using web-enabled devices. This Level 1 edition is designed to help you learn Spanish for use in Latin America.

- Designed to teach you to speak, read, write, and think in a different language
- Utilizes your natural learning capabilities: understand meaning from context and observed patterns
- Proprietary speech-recognition software helps perfect your pronunciation
- Live online sessions with a real coach to further improve your skills
- Success agents provide encouragement and keep up with your language learning
- Boxed software includes headset with microphone
- Native speakers offer live, 50-minute practice sessions



Dictate To Your PC

Nuance Dragon NaturallySpeaking 11 Premium

Why bother typing up documents, reports, and emails when you could dictate them to your PC? It's possible with Dragon NaturallySpeaking 11 Premium.

- Interact with PC using your voice, instead of a keyboard and mouse
- Up to 99% accurate out-of-the-box; no need to spend hours "training" the program to recognize your speech
- Works with virtually any Windows application, including email clients, Microsoft Office, and Web browsers
- Includes a headset for voice commands
- Create a custom word list and voice commands to suit the tasks you perform on your computer



Boost Your Sales Strategy

Palo Alto Software Sales And Marketing Pro

This suite from Palo Alto Software takes you through the creation of a marketing plan and a sales strategy, all the way through forecasting success.

- Provides multiple applications to cover your business needs
- Duct Tape marketing system focuses on your ideal customer and narrows down your marketing focus
- Map out marketing activities that will provide you with goals to help measure your progress
- Delivers expert advice with detailed instructions and actual sales and marketing plans
- Provides lead generation to turn customers into buyers through various lead sources, including social media
- Sales Plan tool tracks your progress and helps you stay on top of key numbers
- Helps you create dynamic marketing plans and manage sales



Track Your Assets

Wasp Barcode

WaspNest Pen Barcode Scanner Suite

With the WaspNest Pen Barcode Scanner Suite, you'll receive a barcode scanner, barcode labeling software, and tracking software, which combines to provide your business with convenient inventory tracking.

- Increase productivity and reduce data entry errors
- Create and print asset tags and barcode labels
- Includes wand scanner to read barcodes
- Wand/pen style barcode scanner lets you quickly access barcode data
- Quickly create barcode labels
- Supports custom fields from QuickBooks
- Asset-tracking tools track product information, such as when it was bought and where it's located
- Asset audits ensure that your inventory is accurate

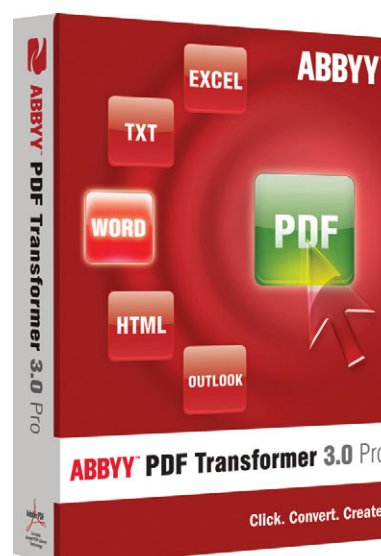


Intelligent PDF Converter

ABBYY PDF Transformer 3.0

ABBYY's PDF Transformer 3.0 converts any image-only PDF file into editable and searchable formats, and it also works with text in non-standard encoding.

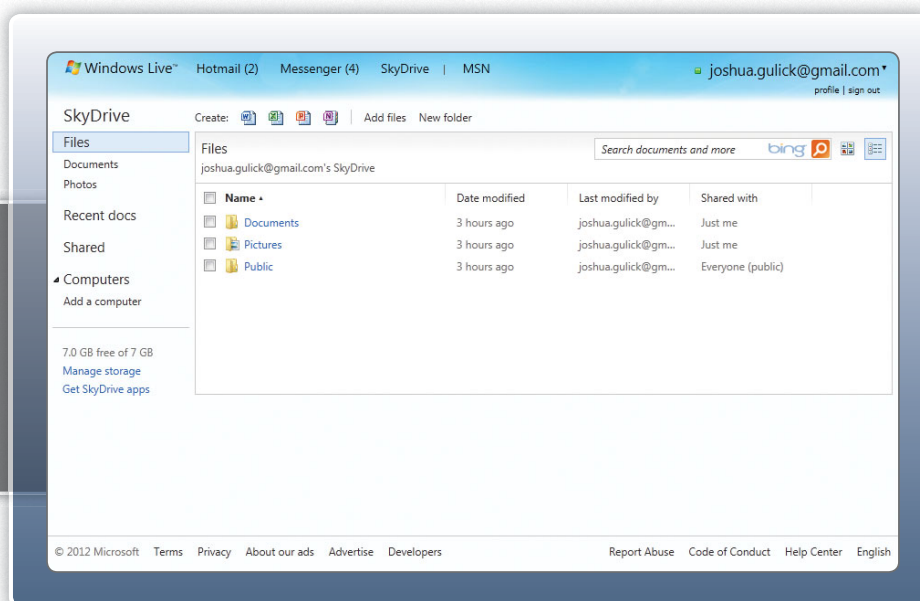
- Uses optical character recognition to read text of any PDF
- Integrates with Microsoft Office programs: convert files directly within Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook
- Recreates all formatting elements, including tables, columns, pictures, and charts; no reformatting after conversion
- Convert PDF files into HTML, DOCX, XLSX, RTF, and other editable formats
- Select specific pages or areas; no need to convert an entire document
- Processes all types of PDF files; supports 184 languages



Windows

News, Views & Tips

You can use Microsoft SkyDrive to store your files (including documents, photos, videos, and other files) online.



WINDOWS NEWS

Microsoft Announces Windows Upgrade Offer

Whenever a new version of Windows is on the horizon, consumers and businesses in the market for new PCs are faced with the same question: Buy a PC now, or wait for the new operating system to come out? In the past, Microsoft has answered that question by offering a steep discount on the new OS to users who buy certain computers shortly before the new Windows launch. When you buy an eligible PC that runs Windows 7, you'll be able to take advantage of a Windows Upgrade Offer for \$14.99. The offer includes a downloadable upgrade to Windows 8 once the new operating system is generally available. The Windows Upgrade Offer started June 2, 2012 and will end January 31, 2013. The upgrade must be redeemed by February of 2013. Keep in mind that you must purchase an eligible computer

to take advantage of the offer—verify that the PC qualifies before you buy it. Visit www.windowsupgradeoffer.com for more information.

Microsoft Announces SkyDrive Updates

SkyDrive (www.skydrive.com), Microsoft's cloud storage and syncing platform, has been getting plenty of attention of late. It will support Windows 8 and Mac OS X Lion and can be experienced in the Windows 8 Release Preview. A noteworthy change is support for using a Windows 8 PC to access your photos stored on your other PCs, so long as they have SkyDrive installed. Another change is that the SkyDrive folder can now support 10 million files created by the SkyDrive apps. And, the SkyDrive folder updates faster when you make changes to SkyDrive files on other devices or on the SkyDrive website. ●



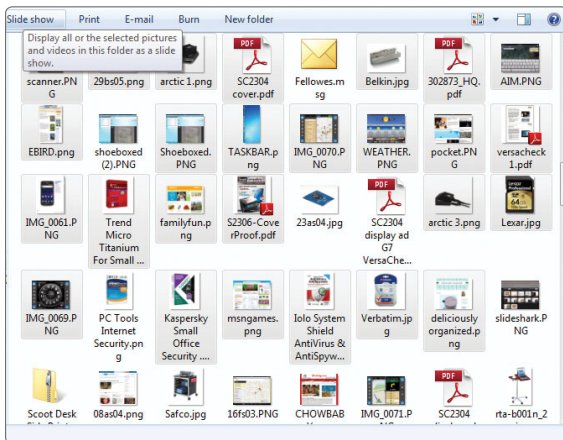
MICROSOFT NEWS

Microsoft Embraces Do-Not-Track

If you've been paying attention to tech security news, you're well aware that privacy advocates—and even some users and organizations who don't consider themselves particularly privacy-oriented—have promoted DNT (Do-Not-Track) features for Internet browsers. Brendon Lynch, Microsoft's chief privacy officer, recently announced that Internet Explorer 10, the version of Internet Explorer that will be available in the upcoming Windows 8 operating system, will have a DNT feature enabled by default. The DNT feature will send a signal to website that the user visits, alerting the websites to the user's preference that it not track the user and not provide behavior-based advertising. At press time, a universal response to a DNT signal has not been agreed upon; Microsoft is an active voice in that discussion.

FAA Selects Microsoft Office 365

The Federal Aviation Administration selected Microsoft Office 365 for cloud-based email, calendaring, instant messaging and web conferencing. The deal will lead to Microsoft Office 365 access for more than 80,000 federal employees, not to mention the employees of other government organizations who have adopted Microsoft Office 365.



Using the SHIFT and CTRL keys, you can select a group of files and folders and then deselect the ones you don't want to grab.

TIPS

Grab & Go

You already know that you can select multiple files or folders by holding CTRL and left-clicking the files you'd like to select. That's an easy way to grab specific files from a group; if you need to select several adjacent files, select a file at the end of that group, hold the SHIFT key, and then click the file at the other end of the group. You have now selected those two files and all files between them (and you can release the SHIFT key).

You can remove certain files from your selection by releasing the SHIFT key and then holding the CTRL key while clicking the files you don't want to select. This is a handy way to select files when you want to select the majority of the files. Of course, if you want all of the items in a folder, click any item and press CTRL-A. ●

HANDY KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

Windows has tons of keyboard shortcuts that can speed up your day-to-day tasks. Here are some Remote Desktop shortcuts worth remembering.

SHORTCUT

FUNCTION

ALT-HOME

This command displays the Start menu when using Remote Desktop.

ALT-DELETE

Display the System menu in Remote Desktop.

ALT-INSERT

If you need to cycle through open programs when using Remote Desktop, use this command. It cycles in the order the programs were started.

ALT-PAGE DOWN

Cycle programs from right to left in Remote Desktop.

ALT-PAGE UP

Cycle programs from left to right in Remote Desktop.

CTRL-ALT-BREAK

This command toggles between window and full screen modes in Remote Desktop.

CTRL-ALT-END

Use this command to display the Windows Security window during Remote Desktop.

CTRL-ALT-MINUS

If you need to take a screenshot of the screen on the client during a Remote Desktop session, use this shortcut.

Windows Shopping

Software For Sale At The Windows 8 Store

Microsoft is doing a number of things differently in Windows 8 compared to previous versions of the firm's operating system software. One of the most important new features is the Windows 8 Store, which is a software marketplace that will provide you with access to Metro-styled apps in a wide range of categories, including gaming, productivity, social networking, messaging, music and video, and more.

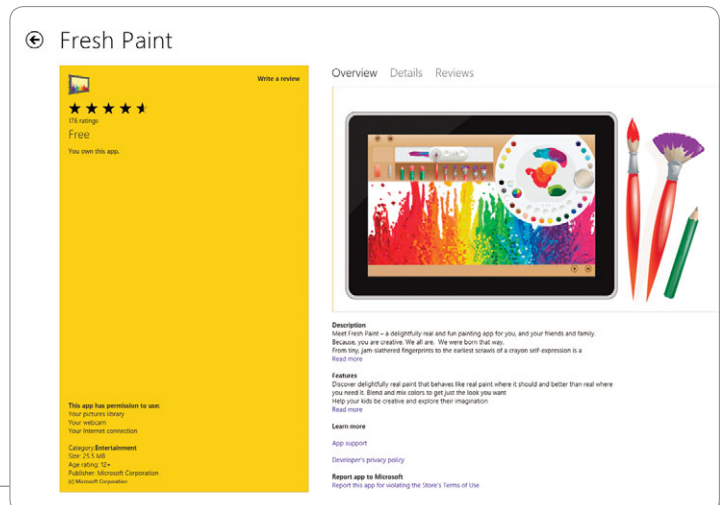
Apps On Your PC

Although the Windows 8 Store will be remarkably similar to the Windows Phone Marketplace, Google Play, and Apple App Store, it differs in that it will offer apps for Windows 8-based tablets, notebooks, and PCs alike. These apps will also all share the Metro-inspired interface elements, which include the use of live tiles, complementary colors, and text of varying size and thickness. Metro apps are designed with touch-based interfaces in mind, but everything

you'll find on the Windows 8 Store will also support mouse and keyboard use.

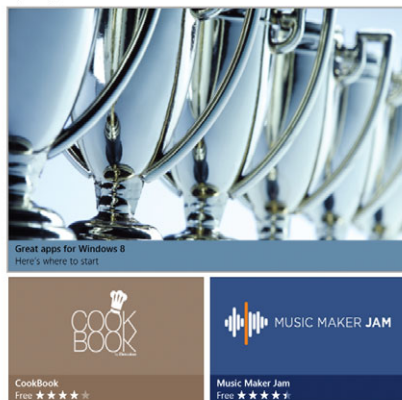
App Alternatives

The Windows 8 Store is going to be a big part of the Windows 8 experience when the new operating



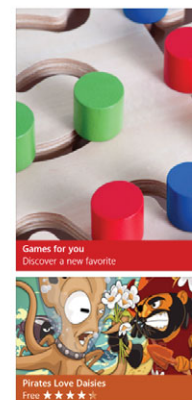
Store

Spotlight



Until Windows 8 launches, the apps on the Store will all be free.

Games



The Windows 8 Store is your one-stop apps shop in Microsoft's latest operating system.

system launches later this year, likely in October, but traditional PC software will still have a place in your Windows 8 machine. Although Microsoft says the Windows Store will only sell Metro-style apps, it will also offer listings for non-Metro software, including Microsoft Office and more. These listings won't let Windows Store shoppers purchase the more traditional PC software directly; instead, the store will provide a link to a Web source where users can purchase and download the software.

Start Shopping Now

If you'd like an early glimpse of the new Windows 8 Store, you can get it by installing the Windows 8 Release Preview, formerly the Windows 8 Consumer Preview on a test PC—don't install it on a PC that you rely on. We won't cover how to do that here, but you can get started by visiting www.tinyurl.com/7pvoxxb and clicking the Get It Now button. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete the installation. When your system is up and running and you're signed into your account, you can access the Windows 8 Store by clicking the Store tile from the Start screen.

The Windows 8 Store looks very similar to the Windows 8 Start screen, consisting of large tiles for individual apps and colored tiles for a handful of app categories. The app tiles you see here feature the title and logo for the app, in addition to the cost and its current rating (on a scale of five stars). As we went to press, the large tile in the upper-right corner of the screen was titled Spotlight, and this category featured eleven apps, including game, reference, e-reader, recipe, fitness, music-creation, and cloud storage apps.

Until Windows 8 launches, every app you'll find here will be free, but Microsoft expects apps to cost between \$1.49 and \$4.99 each. Other features that Windows 8 Store apps will offer include time-limited trials, feature-limited trials, in-app purchases, and advertising-subsidized apps.

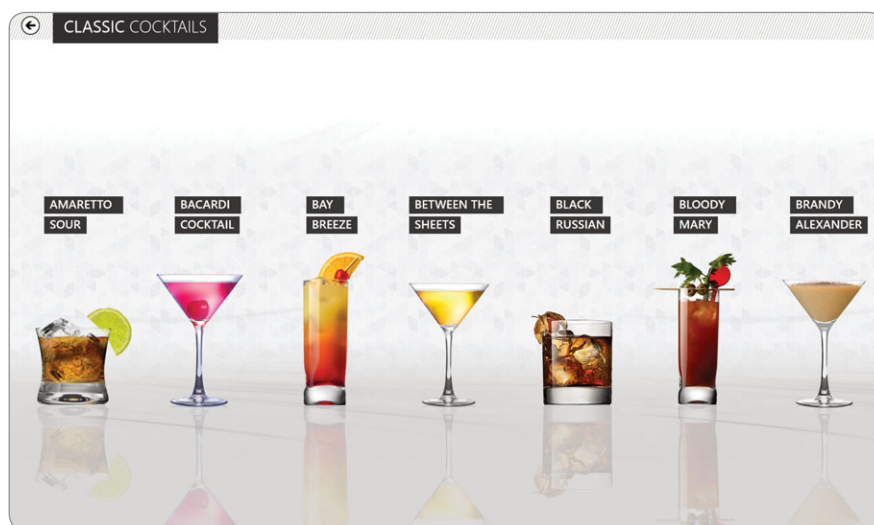
Mobilize With Windows To Go

The new Windows To Go feature of Windows 8 lets enterprises install the operating system on a bootable USB drive. Microsoft indicates that Windows To Go will enable some unique scenarios, such as letting users boot and run a managed copy of Windows 8 from a home PC without impacting any of the user's home data and letting multiple users run and share a PC without compromising personal data.

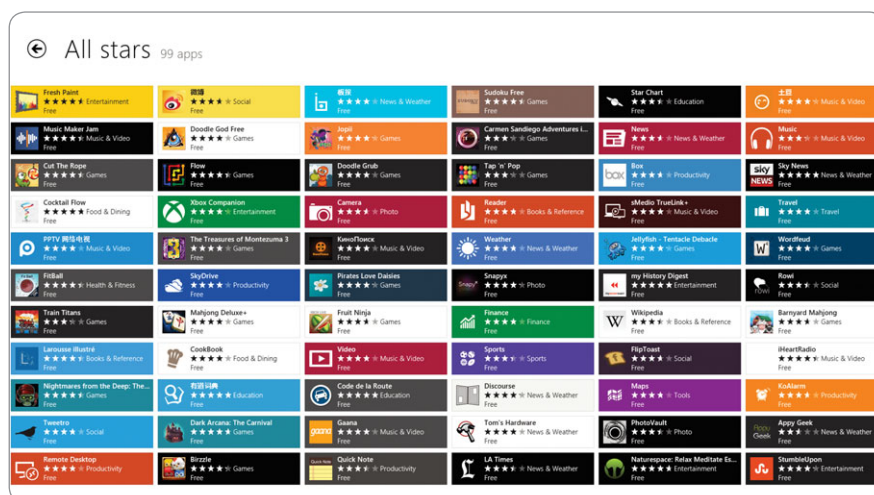
Is The PC Ready?

With Apple's recent launch of a desktop-based apps store, Microsoft is proving to be fairly quick to

respond. How consumers and businesses respond to having (and buying) apps on the desktop, however, is still an open question. ●



Apps available on the Store will all feature Metro-style interface elements.



Although incomplete, Microsoft's app store already has an impressive array of apps, which will surely balloon in the coming months.

Business Tech

Protect Your Equipment



Power fluctuations, surges, and failures are common occurrences. If your office isn't prepared for them, your equipment and (perhaps more importantly) your data are on borrowed time. Use this article get familiar with the equipment that can protect your devices and computers—as well as the equipment that can't.

Power Strips

In the power protection world, power strips are the bottom tier. Most typically feature a built-in circuit breaker that helps to prevent power overloads; this offers some

limited protection against energy surges caused by lightning strikes and surges of power. As such, power strips are affordable and ideal for powering devices that aren't critical to your productivity, such as lights, fans, and radios. A power strip is also handy for powering a series of devices that you want to shut off when you leave a room, because you'll be able to simply flip one switch and kill the power to all the connected devices.

Surge Protectors

Also known as surge suppressors, these power protectors resemble

power strips. The primary difference is that a surge protector can detect when power goes beyond what is considered to be an acceptable level. Excess power is routed to a grounding wire and fuse that will burn out if the electricity exceeds the level it can withstand. In addition to power outlets, many surge protectors also include protection ports for your phone, cable TV, and wired Internet lines.

Protection against extra electricity makes a surge protector perfect for connecting your vital devices, including monitors, printers, smartphones, and home theater equipment. Surge protectors feature a



This Tripp Lite surge protector features eight outlets and can handle 3240 Joules of energy.



The Tripp Lite ECO750UPS gives you an extra 45 minutes of energy during a power failure.



This 6-inch power strip from Staples features a 15-amp reset circuit breaker for basic device protection.

joule rating, which is how much energy the surge protector is capable of absorbing before failure. The higher the joule rating, the more electricity the surge protector can withstand.

UPS

Short for uninterruptible power supply, a UPS has an internal battery that keeps your electronics temporarily operational, even when there's no power. Typically, the battery will provide enough juice for components to run for a few minutes, giving you time to properly shut the devices down. A UPS is an excellent addition for of-

fice computers, servers, and other equipment where data would be lost or hardware could be injured if unexpectedly turned off.

Another benefit of a UPS is that connected electronics won't be damaged during power flickers, brownouts, and other short-term outages. Most UPSes also provide a few extra surge protection outlets (these normally don't provide backup battery power), so you can connect PC peripherals and accessories that won't need to be protected from surprise shutdowns. In addition to providing backup battery power, most UPSes can protect connected devices from electrical surges. ●

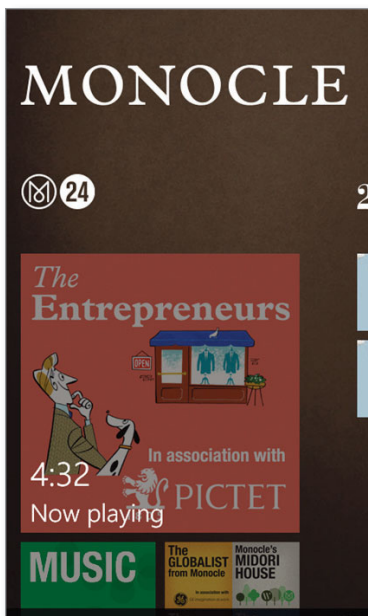
Travel Adapters

International travelers must also consider how their electronics will work when they travel abroad, because other countries have different outlets than the United States. You'll need to invest in outlet adapters that are designed to operate in the countries where you'll be traveling. Most travel adapter kits provide you with several different types of outlet adapters and a guide that indicates where each plug should be used.

Mobile Marketplace

Business Apps *For Android, Windows Phone 7 & iOS*

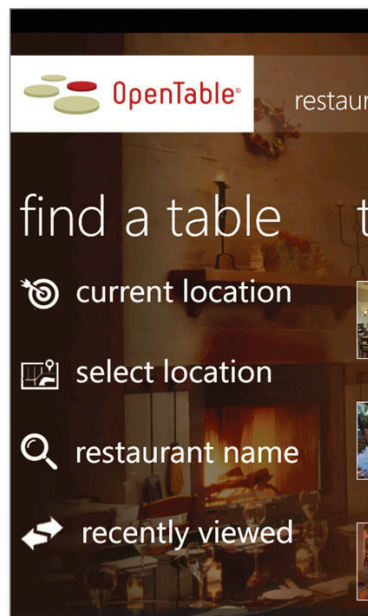
Some powerful business tools are floating in the sea of smartphone apps. Each month, we'll highlight some of the best ones for Windows Phone 7, iOS, and Android platform users. (Unless otherwise noted, Windows Phone 7 apps are available in the Windows Phone Marketplace, Android apps in the Android Market, and iOS apps in Apple's App Store.)



Monocle

Windows Phone 7

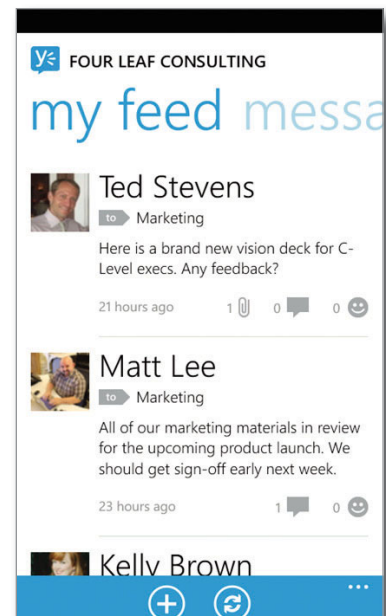
Monocle is a London-based multi-media news empire that covers global news, business, culture, and the arts. This Windows Phone 7 app (\$5.99) brings you Monocle's audio service, Monocle 24, which is a podcast that covers the same topics as the magazine. The app also features a global travel guide for some of the top business cities and resorts as well as hotel, dining, and shopping recommendations and directions. You can also pin your favorites so you can quickly refer back to them. You also get the daily Monocolumn, which is an article that covers news, opinion, and world-class destination recommendations.



OpenTable

Windows Phone 7

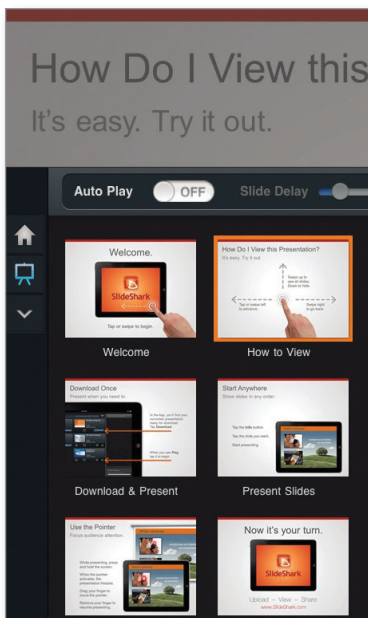
There are few things worse than showing up at a restaurant and finding out you'll have to wait to be seated. With OpenTable (free), you never have to worry about it again. This app lets you instantly confirm reservations at any eatery in the expansive database of more than 25,000 restaurants. Sign up for a free Dining Rewards account and you will be able to earn points that you can redeem for free food at your favorite OpenTable restaurants. This app makes finding restaurants easy, with the ability to search by name, by proximity, and by real-time table availability. OpenTable will ensure that you're never stuck waiting for a table again.



Yammer

Windows Phone 7

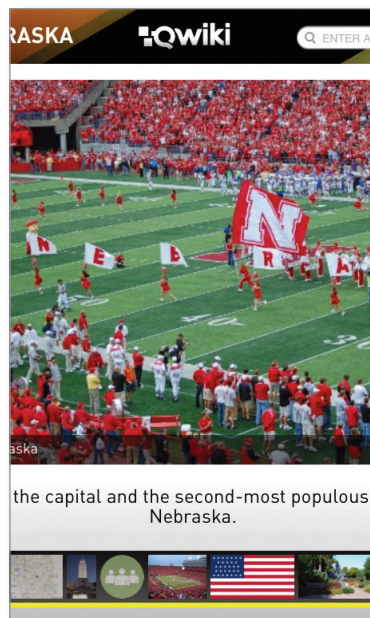
Social networks have a lot to offer businesses, but sadly, some of the most popular options don't have strict enough privacy settings to satisfy discerning entrepreneurs. Yammer (free) is a social networking app built from the ground up for business. This private and secure social network lets you communicate with your coworkers, clients, customers, and partners to collaborate, share ideas, and do business. Features include access to real-time conversation, the ability to view messages, post updates, and receive important notifications when you're away from your main PC or notebook.



SlideShark

iPad

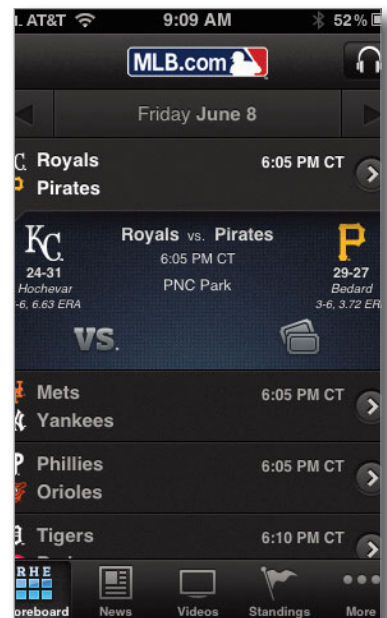
Created for business use by Brainshark, the free SlideShark lets you display your Microsoft PowerPoint presentations on your iPad. The app preserves all of the flourishes that make your presentation exciting, including special fonts, animations, graphics, and colors that you've worked into the slideshow. It also supports presenting via TVs and projectors, and lets you share presentations via email and social media. To use the app, you'll first upload the presentation to an online SlideShark account. Then, you'll download it to your iPad. At that point, you're ready to view your slideshow on the iPad or display it via your projector or TV.



Qwiki

iPad

Need to know more about a business, a city, or a monument? Take a look at the free Qwiki, which pulls data from the Internet to create a presentation for you on your iPad. Covering literally millions of topics, images, video, and narration come together to give you a reference unlike a typical report. View a zoom-able map to discover Qwikis for places and things around the world, or else search for specific topics and places. Since Qwiki is not data-intensive, the app can be used over a cell connection when Wi-Fi is not available.



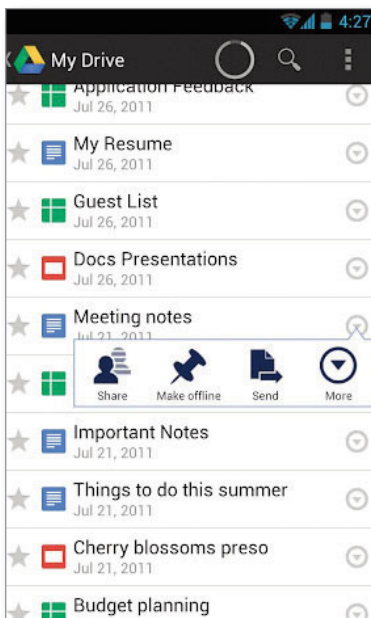
NBC Sports Talk for iPad

iPad

iPod touch

iPhone

If you're a sports fanatic, we have just the thing for you: NBC has mobile device-based sports talk shows for an array of pro sports, including basketball, football, golf, soccer, and hockey, among others. Whether it's news, rumors, or analysis, NBC Sports Talk has you covered. There are even Sports Talk platforms dedicated specifically to college football and basketball. This free app for the iPad gives you access to all of them and provides plenty of offline content, as well. Check out the articles and share them with friends via Facebook and Twitter.



Google Drive

Android

Google Drive (free), formerly Google Docs, is a cloud-based repository for all your documents, spreadsheets, presentations, photos, videos, music, and more. On the Web-based desktop app, you can drag and drop virtually anything you want, and quickly access it from your Android-based device. You can also share files with others, collaborate on a single document with multiple author, and upload and convert files so you can open them in Microsoft Office. Other features include the ability to make files available offline, view PDFs, and take a photo of text and convert it into a Google document.

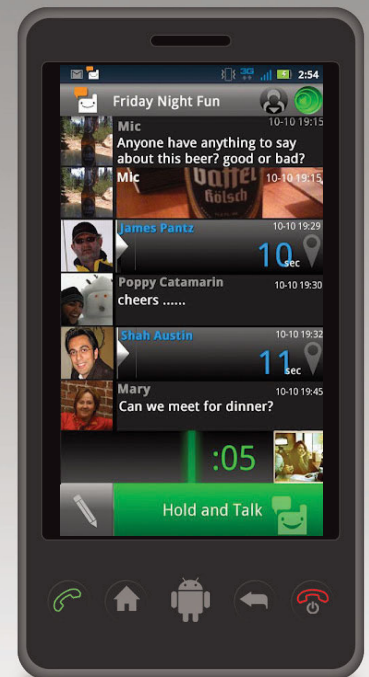


How To Tie A Tie

Android

For some of us, tying a necktie is just a part of our daily routine, but it can be an elusive skill for many. If you're suiting up for a job interview, meeting with an important client, or just getting spiffed up for a special occasion, How To Tie A Tie (free) will help you tie twelve of the most popular necktie knots, including the run-of-the-mill Simple Double and the complex Windsor, complete with its distinctive dimple. A series of images with arrows walks you through each step of the process and a finished result image lets you compare yours with the ideal version so you always know you're looking your best when you step out.

App Of The Month



Voxer Walkie-Talkie PTT

Android

Voxer Walkie-Talkie PTT (free) lets you turn your Android-based smartphone into a Push-to-Talk device, so you can send instant audio, text, and photo messages to a single contact or a group of contacts. Your friends can listen as you talk or playback your message later. You can also communicate with iPhone and iPad users who use Voxer. Want to let someone know where you are, send your location with Voxer. You can also participate in group chats, create messages offline, and connect with Facebook friends. This ad-free app works on 3G, 4G, and EDGE cellular networks as well as over Wi-Fi.

Cut Fees, Gain Revenue With gCard

A Payment Card With 0% Interest, 0% Fees

Are you losing business revenue due to unauthorized transactions, credit card percentage fees, per-transaction minimums, and other fees? If so, you should check out the gCard from gValidate: It offers customers a card-style of payment with incredible security—and with no interest or per-transaction fees.

How Does The gCard Work?

When someone signs up for the gCard (visit gValidate.com/sc1 to learn more), the number is tied to a financial account that is verified by gValidate. Once approved, the customer can use the card to make payments just as he or she would with a credit card, except that the payments are more secure because the merchant won't be inputting any checking account data or credit card numbers during the checkout process. Additionally, gCard members receive activity notifications through text messages or emails, and they can block a transaction if they believe it to be unauthorized. The added security will eliminate the fulfillment of unauthorized transactions on the merchant end.

gCard Payments

After the customer enters the card number during checkout, either online or at point-of-sale, your business will be able to print and draw a DNA Secure check on the validated financial account associated with the customer's gCard. For payment on a website, you can accept gChecks or gCards into the online shopping cart to offer a "one-click" experience for customers. With gCard at point-of-sale, you can start processing the check right away. gValidate's ASP Merchant Plan costs \$19.99 a year and includes 1000 free gCard and gCheck transactions. Transactions after 1000 are \$0.02 each.

Other Benefits

By joining gValidate's ASP Merchant Plan, your business can also offer bill payment services that allow you to print and deliver DNA Secure checks that will pay bills on behalf of your clients. Anyone with a validated bank account is pre-approved. The service is ideal for CPAs, financial advisors, and payroll companies. gValidate also enables you to create and print blank DNA Secure checks as a service to customers. ●



The gCard provides the convenience of a credit card with the security of a validated check.

With gCard, customers can verify any transaction before purchase.

1 – Pay by gCard

Mobile, point of sale or online.



2 – Instant notification

Review transactions via email/SMS – block unauthorized charges instantly!



3 – Payment is processed

Payment is drawn on the checking account associated with your gCard.



Promote Your Business

Pros & Cons Of Daily Deals

Daily deal websites like Groupon (www.groupon.com) and LivingSocial (www.livingsocial.com) are popular with consumers and businesses alike, but there's a growing consensus that they aren't for every business. Consumers are also beginning to wise up about the inherent pitfalls of limited-time offers on products and services they may not want or need. In this article, we'll explore what works when it comes to daily deals and what just doesn't.

How Deals Make Profits

Guaranteed customers are one of the best reasons to offer a deal-of-the-day through Groupon, Living Social, or another website. Furthermore, you know exactly how many consumers will be patronizing your establishment following the deal's launch. Deal sites are a sure way to fill the books during a slow season. You can also use a deal site to help you quickly move product that hasn't been selling well.

Balancing Demand

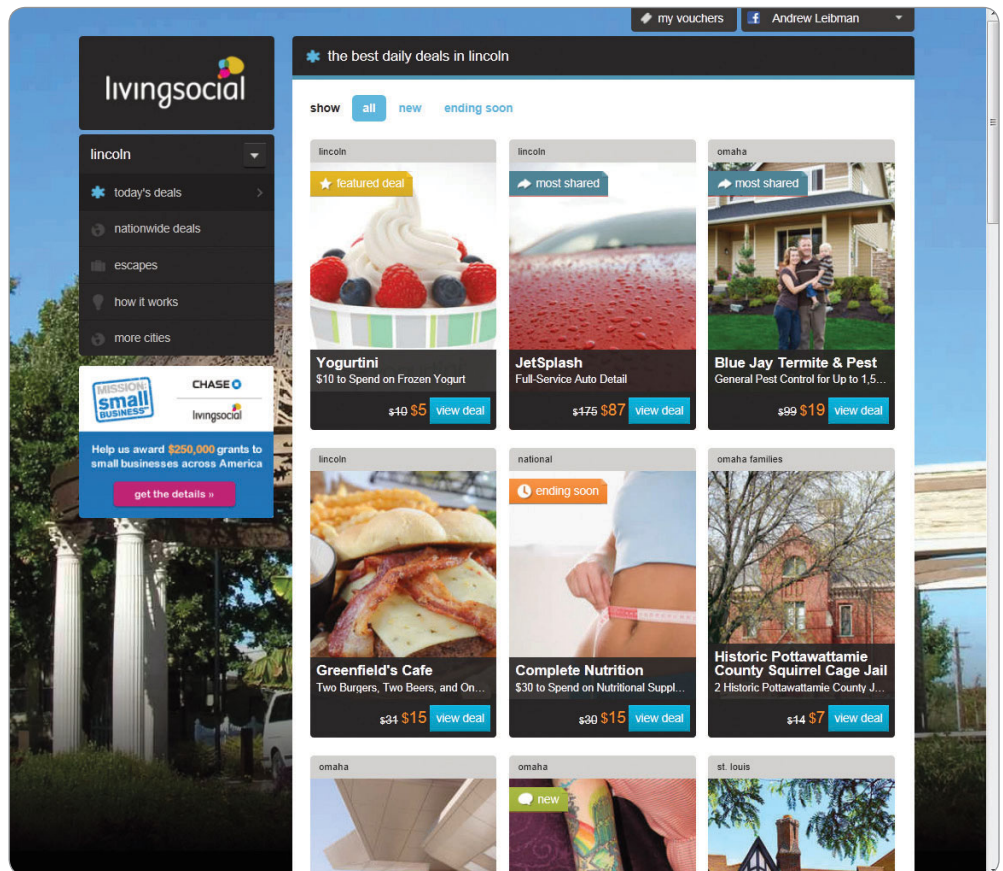
Underestimating demand is one of the biggest risks of signing on to do a deal-of-the-day. If your business is only large enough to service two or three customers at a time, you may be faced with a situation where you're overbooked, which leaves a large

group of people with an unfavorable impression of your organization. On the flip side, if you overestimate the response to your deal, you may have stocked up on product you won't be able to sell quickly or promised your employees hours you can't afford.

Get Real

Before you approach a deal website, make sure to temper your expectations. Many of them require

fairly deep discounts, typically 50% off the regular price. Also, remember that these websites take a hefty cut of the voucher price, often as much as half of it; so your 50% off voucher can actually cost you 75% of your regular fee. If that's not achievable, then stay away. Customers will look at the fine print, and even those who don't will regret their purchases if the deal ends up being too limited to reasonably redeem.



LivingSocial has local daily deals, nationwide deals, and travel deals, so choose the one that works best for your organization.

Out Of Your Hands

You may pride yourself on your business' customer service team, but you have to keep in mind that you're allowing your potential customers to interact with the deal-of-the-day website before they deal with you. Any trouble or dissatisfaction they experience with the website will almost certainly reflect on your business, and these websites aren't known for having stellar dispute resolution track records. Often, the website's no-refund policy will trump any refund or exchange policies you may have. Disgruntled consumers may choose to direct their dissatisfaction against your business if they regret an impulsive purchase.

Learn To Love Limitations

Although we just cautioned against instituting too many limitations on your daily deal, it's not a bad idea to attach an expiration date to them. Believe it or not, some who purchase the voucher will never redeem it, which is just money in your pocket.

Publicity On The Cheap

Another great reason to try a deal-of-the-day site is to drum up publicity that wouldn't have otherwise been possible. Groupon and LivingSocial both have massive mailing lists full of customers who are actively interested in seeing daily deals. For instance, you can use the daily deal to entice customers to try out a new restaurant, or sample a new menu at a well-established restaurant.

Deal Or Dud?

While not perfect for every business, deal-of-the-day sites can do a lot for you. They can help you move merchandise very quickly, attract new customers, introduce old customers to something new, and make the slow season boom. Follow our advice and you're much more likely to avoid your deal becoming a dud. ●

The screenshot shows the 'GROUPONWORKS FOR BUSINESSES' website. The main heading is 'Get Featured'. Below it, there's a form with the following fields: 'Business Name', 'Website (please format as www.yourwebsite.com)', 'Greeting' (with a dropdown menu set to '--None--'), 'First Name', and 'Last Name'. To the right of the form, there are two boxes: 'GROUPON NOW!' with the text 'Create real-time deals to attract hyper-local customers now.' and a 'Read More >>' link; and 'GROUPON REWARDS' with the text 'Learn more about this easy to use loyalty program.' and a 'Read More >>' link. At the bottom right, there is a 'CONTACT INFORMATION' section with the text 'Groupon Specialist: 877-788-7858 Ext. 2'.

Both Groupon and LivingSocial have Web forms that you can fill out to get more information about running your own deal.

The screenshot shows a Groupon 'Featured Deal' for 'Dairy Queen - South Street Lincoln'. The deal is for an '8- or 10-Inch Blizzard or Original DQ Ice-Cream Cake or \$5 for \$10 Worth of Ice Cream and Frozen Treats'. The price is shown as 'from \$5' with a 'Buy!' button. A table shows the value breakdown: Value \$10, Discount 50%, You Save \$5. There's a 'Buy it for a friend!' button and a 'Limited Time Only! 1 day 23:57:42' timer. Below the timer, it says 'Over 1,000 bought' and 'Limited quantity available'. A 'Simple Pleasures' button is also visible. To the right, there are sections for 'Refer Friends. Get \$10*', 'Deals for Pets', and 'More Great Deals'. The 'Deals for Pets' section features a '60- or 90-Minute Massage at Barb's Healing Hands Massage (Up to 51% Off)'. The 'More Great Deals' section features a '\$25 \$50 value' deal for 'Lincoln (Downtown) Oil Change with Option of Tire Rotation at 6 to 6 Auto Service (Up to 61% Off)'.

Groupon's Featured Deal can expose your business to a whole new customer base.

The screenshot shows the LivingSocial website. The top navigation bar includes 'my vouchers' and 'Andrew Leibman'. The main heading is 'escapes'. Below it, there are tabs for 'all escapes', 'nearby', 'international', 'beach', 'family', 'spa / wellness', 'adventure', and 'luxury'. The 'nearby' tab is selected. The main content area features a large image of 'Lake Las Vegas Villa' in Henderson, NV. Below this, there are two smaller images: 'St. Louis-Area Inn' in St. Louis, MO, and 'Michigan B&B' in Crystal Falls, MI.

Vacation destination deals are popular, but avoid excessive blackout dates.

Laptops

When you need to work efficiently on the go, there's no better tool than a laptop. It offers the power necessary to handle complex applications and will provide the connectivity options, such as USB ports, memory card slots, wired Internet, Wi-Fi, and audio ports, to let you attach a variety of peripherals and access the Internet.

Laptop Benefits

Compared to a tablet or smartphone, a laptop provides you with a built-in keyboard that's full size or near full size, so you'll be able to touch-type for fast data entry. Compared to a desktop PC, you'll enjoy the ability to use the computer anywhere you go, which may also allow you to be more productive. For example, you can work during your commute or read through emails at a coffee shop between client visits. Or maybe you just want to work outside on nice days.

Ideal Laptop Users

Business travelers enjoy the power and versatility that a laptop offers. The portable computing power of a laptop is also helpful for photographers and videographers who demand quick rendering when out in the field. Lower cost laptops are a good choice for students who require a PC they can use away from

home. Home users who want to move from desk to the couch will also like the lightweight freedom of a laptop.

What You'll Find Here

The following pages will help you learn more about laptops, such as how to maintain them and how to troubleshoot problems. Additionally, our Laptop Buyer's Guide will highlight some new models and list the key features, which can help you determine if that laptop is right for you. ●



Business travelers enjoy the power and versatility that a laptop offers.



Laptop Maintenance Tips

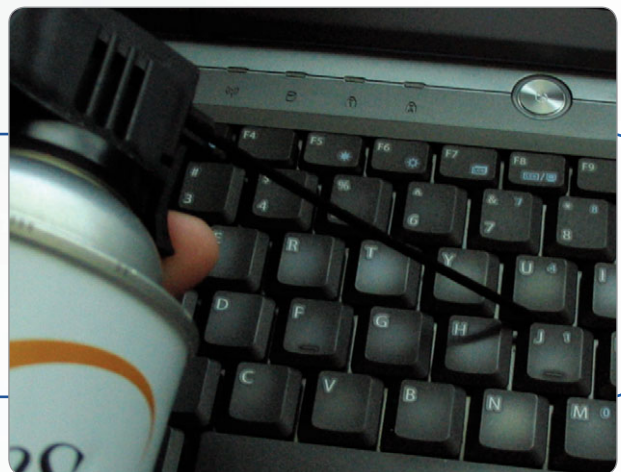
A Clean Machine

While it's true that laptops are designed to handle the difficulties of travel, that doesn't mean that they are impervious to damage.

Dust, heat, and bumps are all dangers that can reduce the useful lifespan of your laptop. Here, we'll cover some common laptop maintenance tips that you can perform.

Fan Cleaning

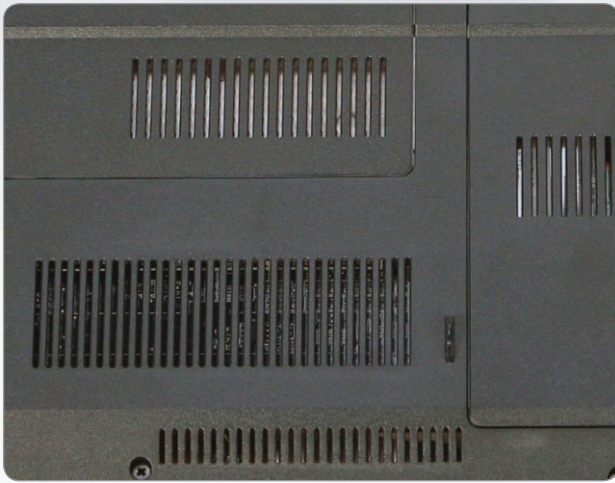
Laptops typically have fan vents on the sides and back of the case, which is where the laptop pushes out the heat generated by the processor and other components. Over time, dust can build up in the vents and trap some of the heat inside the case. That heat can increase the temperature of all of components inside the case and may cause some parts to overheat and either fail or behave erratically. At the very least, the excess heat will keep the hardware from working at its peak. You can use a can of compressed air to blow the dust out of the vents.



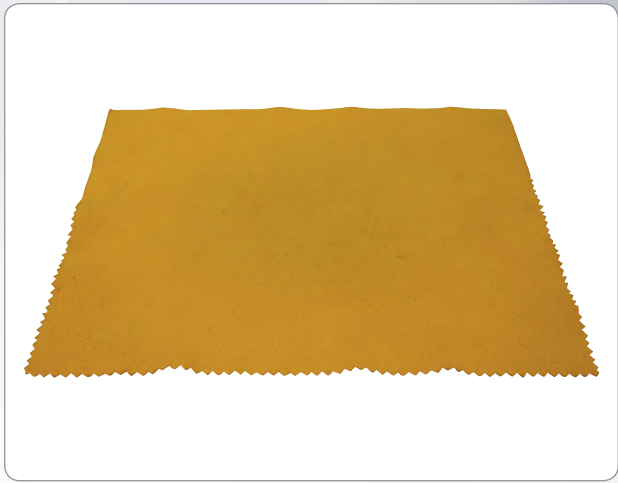
- ⓘ A can of compressed air can help to remove dirt from the keyboard.

Keyboard Touch-Up

Another entry point for dust and debris is the keyboard. Similar to the vents, you'll want to use a can of compressed air to blow any dirt out from under the keyboard. When using the can of compressed air, it's best to turn the keyboard upside down, so that the debris has someplace to fall. Try to do this over a surface you can easily clean after the dust and dirt has fallen out. If you managed to spill something sticky onto the surface of the keys, dip a cotton swap in isopropyl alcohol and use the cotton swap to clean the sticky substance off the side and tops of the keys.



- ⬆ Ensure that your laptop's vents are free of dust.



- ⬆ You'll want a micro fiber cloth to clean your monitor.

Heat Avoidance

While we've noted that internal heat is a threat to your laptop, you'll also want to watch out for placing your laptop in locations where the entire laptop will be exposed to prolonged external heat. Avoid leaving your laptop in a hot car, placing it in direct sunlight for several hours, or placing it next to a heater or radiator.

Clean The Screen

The LCD screens found on laptops and monitors require a specific cleaning solution to create a streak-free look. Modern cleaning agents contain ammonia that can damage the display panel. Invest in a monitor cleaning spray and a micro fiber cloth to wipe down the screen. Spray the monitor cleaner onto the micro fiber cloth and wipe down the screen. Don't spray the monitor cleaning solution directly onto the screen, because it can streak down and leave a mark.

Connector Damage

Many wireless mice come with a tiny USB receiver that you can leave plugged into the unit. If you leave any USB devices in the ports, be sure to avoid knocking them out when you place the laptop in your travel bag, because

the rough removal may damage the ports or the laptop's motherboard. Similarly, you'll want to avoid damage to the laptop's power socket by ensuring that the power cord isn't positioned in a location where someone may trip on it and forcefully pull the power cord out.

Final Touches

Once you've addressed the internal parts, you can clean the exterior of the case. Use a damp cloth to wipe down the exterior and remove any dirt that has accumulated. If there are slight scratches along the exterior, you can try to buff out the scratch with the damp cloth. You may also want to open the lid and wipe down the areas around the keyboard to remove dust.

Clean the laptop every other month and you should avoid the accumulation of debris that could ultimately injure the system. ●

Troubleshoot Your Laptop

Quick Fixes For Common Problems

You rely on your laptop to get work done, so even minor computer glitches can mean big productivity problems.

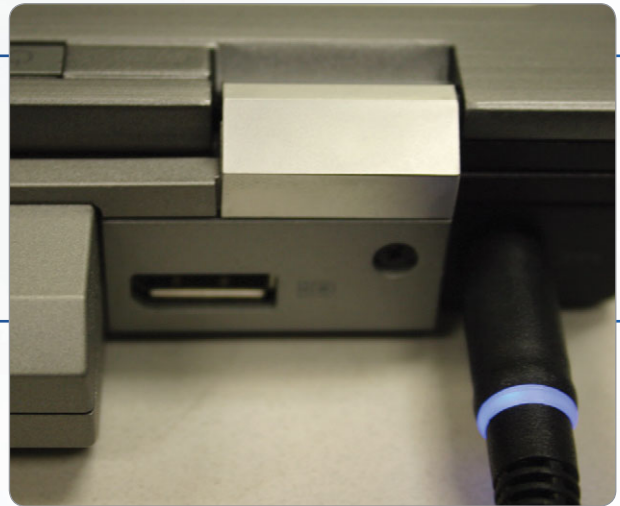
In this article, we'll provide fixes for the most common laptop problems, to help you get your device up and running.

Laptop Isn't Turning On

This can be frustrating, as you don't have much information to help determine what's wrong. Look for a light on the laptop that indicates whether or not the battery is being charged. It's possible the laptop has been plugged into an outlet that's not functional, so you'll want to try plugging the power adapter into a different outlet. If the battery appears to be charging, let it sit for 10 minutes to see if the battery just needed some juice. If the laptop still won't turn on, it's likely there is a problem with the battery.

Laptop Turns On But Doesn't Run

In this situation, you'll likely hear fans turn on and see lights on the laptop—but the PC doesn't display anything on the screen. After a few seconds, the laptop shuts down and may attempt to restart. This often happens when some component on the laptop is failing. Try unplugging any peripherals, such as a USB

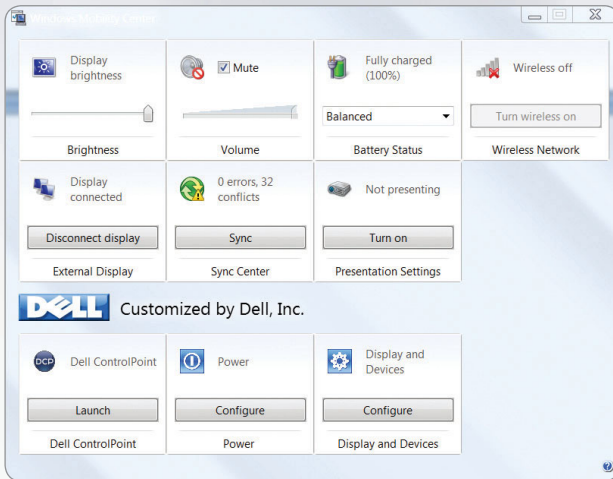


Many new laptops have LED indicators that will tell you if the laptop is receiving power.

flash drive or audio cables, that could be causing a short in the system. If that doesn't work, you may need to take the laptop in for repairs, as most of the hardware inside of a laptop is fairly inaccessible.

Laptop Randomly Turns Off

When a laptop gets too hot, it will typically shut itself down to protect the internal components from overheating. If this is happening to you, track down the cause of the heat. For instance, is there anything blocking the vents, such as dust or a blanket, that's preventing the vents from exhausting hot air? A can of compressed air can be used to blow dust out of the vents. Random shutdowns may also occur due to an overheated battery or short circuit within the laptop.



From the Windows Mobility Center, you can adjust key settings that impact battery life.



- Ⓐ If your laptop is having trouble starting, try removing some of the external devices connected to the laptop to rule out a short.



- Ⓐ When your laptop freezes up, you may need to remove the battery to restart it.

Laptop Is Frozen

If this were a desktop computer, you could simply pull the power cable, but a laptop's battery will allow it to continue running—even when it freezes up. To quickly reboot the laptop, press the Power button and hold it for about five seconds. The laptop should power down. Press the power button again to turn on the device.

Another way to shake the laptop out of its freeze is to disconnect the power cord and turn the laptop over to remove the battery. Wait about 10 seconds for the residual power to discharge, and you'll be able to reinstall the battery. Now, you can turn the laptop on, reload your applications, and start off where you last saved.

Battery Life Is Less Than Expected

When you first purchased your laptop, it could run for hours at a time. Now, you're lucky if you get an hour out of it. With the Lithium ion batteries found in today's laptops, total capacity is expected to decline as you discharge and recharge the battery. You can utilize the Windows Mobility Center found in Windows 7 and Windows Vista to make changes to settings that can extend battery life. For instance, you could lower the brightness of your screen, turn off wireless connections that aren't being used, and change Windows' power modes to extend battery life.

If you can rule out power and heat issues when troubleshooting your laptop, it'll be much easier to pinpoint the cause of the problem.

\$910.99
us.acer.com

Acer TravelMate TimelineX 14-inch

With the TravelMate TimelineX, Acer has a lightweight laptop that offers built-in security and a range of communication hardware, including Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity for fast, wireless data transfers.

- Dual-core 1.6GHz Intel processor, 4GB of memory, a 320GB hard drive, and a 14-inch screen
- Slim, lightweight
- Fingerprint reader ensures secure access to files
- Eight-hour battery life
- Anti-shock technology helps protect your data
- Thermal Comfort design cools your processor and case, enhances system lifespan



acer

\$1,449.99
Zenbook.asus.com

ASUS ZENBOOK

The ASUS ZENBOOK is only 0.35-inches thick, with a spun metal finish that appears as concentric circles for a refined exterior appearance.

- Intel Core i7 processor
- 4GB memory
- Turbo Boost technology automatically ramps up the CPU's speed when the laptop is under load
- 256GB SSD loads applications much faster than a standard laptop hard drive
- Energy-efficient 13.3-inch LED screen offers a hi-def resolution of 1600 x 900
- 50W lithium polymer battery provides up to seven hours of battery life



ASUS
Rock Solid · Heart Touching

Dell Inspiron 17R

The 17.3-inch Dell Inspiron 17R makes a solid desktop replacement.

- 2.5GHz Intel Core i5 processor with Intel Turbo Boost
- 8GB memory, 750GB hard drive
- Built-in Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity
- Built-in 1.3MP webcam, analog microphone
- 8-in-1 memory card reader
- Switchable lid allows customization
- Dell's Stage application provides a quick way to access your favorite images, videos, and music



Gateway NV55S22u

The NV55S22u is a powerful multitasking system that can handle a variety of media.

- 1.6GHz AMD quad-core processor
- 6GB of memory, 500GB hard drive
- Discrete AMD Radeon HD 6620G graphics processor can handle video- and image-editing
- Built-in Blu-ray player and HDMI output let you connect the laptop to a TV and enjoy Blu-ray HD movies on the big screen
- 15.6-inch screen with ultra-bright color LCD
- Widescreen aspect ratio is perfect for watching movies and TV



\$1,381.49
www.hp.com

HP EliteBook 2560p

HP's EliteBook 2560p is a 12.5-inch laptop that weighs a mere 3.68 pounds. The portable design makes it a great fit for road warriors.

- 2.5GHz Intel Core i5 processor
- 4GB of memory, 128GB hard drive
- Built-in 802.11a/b/g/n Wi-Fi and Bluetooth
- Hi-def webcam with a dual microphone array for high-quality video conferencing
- SRS Premium Sound speakers for great multimedia sound
- Mobile broadband ready—just insert a provider's card to work anywhere



\$1,392.99
www.lenovo.com

Lenovo ThinkPad W520

If you need a powerful mobile workstation, check out the ThinkPad W520. You'll spend more time multitasking and less time waiting.

- Intel Core i7 quad-core 2.4GHz processor
- 4GB of memory and a 500GB hard drive
- Up to 10.80 hours of battery life from a 9-cell Lithium-ion battery
- 15.6-inch active matrix color LCD screen with a widescreen resolution of 1600 x 900
- Intel's Centrino Advanced-N technology delivers both 802.11a/b/g/n Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity



\$1,593.49
www.lenovo.com

Lenovo ThinkPad X1

With the ThinkPad X1, Lenovo made no compromises. The entire system is designed around travel convenience, with a 13.3-inch screen and a weight of just 3.7 pounds.

- 2.5GHz Intel Core i5 dual-core processor
- 8GB memory, up to 160GB SSD Or 320GB hard drive
- Lenovo's RapidCharge technology brings the battery from empty to 80% in 30 minutes
- Serious laptop protection: carbon-fiber roll cage, spill-resistant keyboard, Corning Gorilla Glass display
- Backlit keyboard lets you work in a dark airplane cabin
- Dolby Home Theater sound
- SuperBright LCD screen with a resolution of 1366 x 768
- 802.11 a/b/g/n and Bluetooth wireless connectivity

lenovo FOR
THOSE
WHO DO.



\$949.99
www.samsung.com

Samsung Series 5 14.0 Ultra

The sleek Series 5 14.0 Ultra utilizes Samsung's Express-Cache technology to bring the quick performance of an SSD to a laptop hard drive, so you'll enjoy both speed and big storage capacity.

- Intel Core i5 1.6GHz processor
- 4MB memory, 500GB hard drive
- 3.94 pounds, less than an inch thick
- Built-in DVD burner, 4-in-1 memory card reader
- 1.3MP webcam
- HDMI Out for displaying HD content
- Samsung's Fast Boot gets you up and working in just 20 seconds



Security Software



The sad truth is, every time you use your computer, malware, rootkits, phishing sites, scams, and hackers are all waiting for their chance to wreak havoc on your PC, software, personal privacy, and identity. But knowing that doesn't have to be debilitating; security software is the key to dealing with threats before they can make your life difficult. This month, we'll take a look at some of the ways security software can help prevent problems, resolve issues, and put your mind at ease.

For more information on how to make sure your security software is installed and running, take a look at the article titled "Are You Really Protected?" In this article, we'll also explore a few ways to ensure your security software stays up to date, so you're less likely to experience a security lapse that exposes your sensitive data to cyber criminals or compromises the reliable performance of your system.

Inevitably, problems do occur, even to the most security-conscious among us. Another important tactic to master when it comes to computer security is knowing what to do when something goes wrong. Read our "Troubleshoot Security Software Problems"

article to see some common problems you may encounter, along with how best to resolve them and prevent them from occurring again.

Last but not least, newly armed with what to look for in your ideal security suite, we bring you our Security Software Buyer's Guide, which lists various security products designed to put a stop to viruses, malware, spyware, and cyber thieves; protect your sensitive data; and help you recover from a catastrophic system failure. For your convenience, we've included pricing, the company's URL, and a handful of features we think you'll appreciate, whether you're protecting your home or business PCs. ●

Inevitably, problems do occur, even to the most security-conscious among us.



Are You Really Protected?

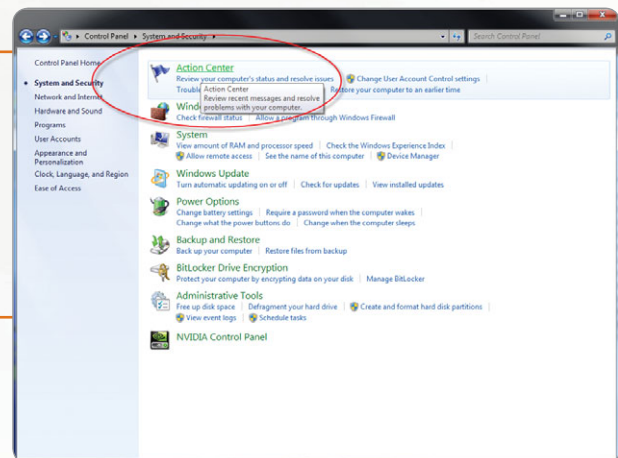
Keep Your Security Software Up-To-Date & Active

Every PC you use ought to have multiple types of security software installed and properly configured before you should feel safe operating it.

The three primary defenses you need include antivirus, antispysware, and firewall software. Antivirus software actively blocks threats, regularly scans your system, and lets you quarantine or completely remove malware. A firewall will block unauthorized access to your PC. Antispysware prevents websites and malware from collecting private data from your PC. Read on to learn how to keep your security software up to date and your PC secure.

Security Assessment

The first step in making sure your system is secure is to determine whether or not you have the recommended security software installed to begin with. Thankfully, Windows 7's Action Center is a single location that displays the status of all of your security software. To access this, click Start, Control Panel, System & Security, and then click Action Center. To find what we're looking for, click the Security category to expand it. Use this as a protection checklist. Any items marked "Currently Not Monitored," "Off," "Scan Now," or "Find A Program Online" deserve your attention.



⚠ The Windows 7 Action Center gives you everything you need to diagnose your PC's security health.

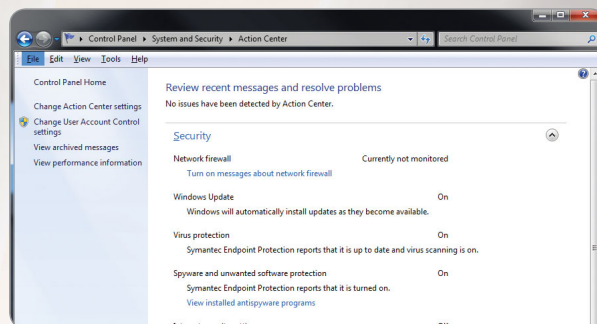
The only reason you might leave something labeled as Currently Not Monitored is if you're running software of that type that is not compatible with Action Center's notifications. For instance, if your company runs firewall software at the server level and individual PCs don't require it, then you can safely leave the firewall setting unmonitored. Otherwise, enable monitoring by clicking Turn On Messages About Network Firewall, and then Virus Protection.

Items marked "Off" may be installed but not currently operating. You'll need to launch these programs from the All Programs Menu or enable them from the system tray by right-clicking them and clicking the appropriate option.

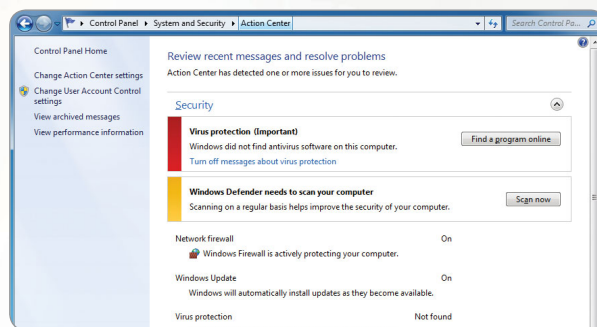
The yellow notifications with a Scan Now button simply indicate that a security utility is overdue for



- After clicking Find A Program Online, click any of the security software providers to see the provider's download page.



- Other items monitored in the Action Center include Windows Update, Internet Security Settings, and Network Access Protection.



- Red and yellow indicators suggest you need to perform a specific task, such as install software, update it, or run a scan.

a scan of your system. Click the button to launch the software and initiate the scan. If the scan does not begin automatically, manually initiate one.

Anything with a red bar to the left and a Find A Program Online button indicates that the software in question is not installed or not detected. Again, if you know that you do have software installed and you can verify that it is running properly, you can safely click Turn Off Messages About. The item you're most likely to be alerted to install is antivirus software, as Windows 7 doesn't come with antivirus software preinstalled.

Install Posthaste

If you discover that security software, such as an antivirus utility, is not installed, you need to rectify this immediately. From the Action Center, click the Find A Program Online button. The resulting Web page displays several security software providers with links to their security software offerings for you to download. Click one and install the software.

Latest & Greatest

All the security software in the world won't help you if it's out-of-date. Fortunately, most software automatically updates regularly. For instance, Windows Defender and Microsoft Security Essentials both automatically update just prior to scanning. The Action Center will typically alert to you any software that needs and update, but it's a good idea to regularly launch your security utilities one-by-one and check to see that they are updating properly.

Security Champ

Staying on top of your PC's security status is surprisingly simple thanks to Windows 7's Action Center. With it, you can make sure everything you need to protect your identity, software, and system integrity is running as it should and fully updated. The hardest part is just remembering to explore the Action Center regularly.

High Priority Problems

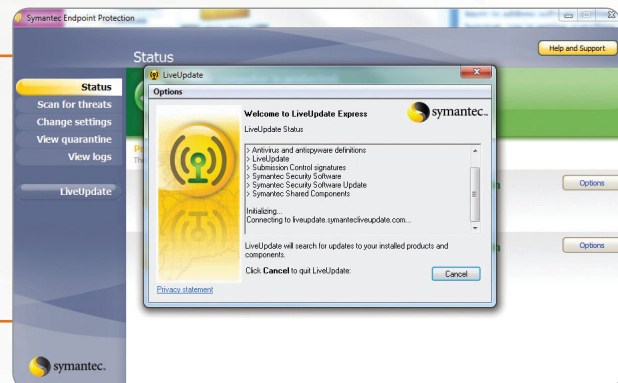
Troubleshoot Your Security Software

We know the data on your PC is more valuable than the sum of its parts, so you know to address software problems quickly.

When your security software malfunctions, you're putting everything on the line until it's fixed. Read on for solutions to a few problems you may encounter with your security software.

Your Antivirus Software Appears Not To Be Functioning Or Dramatically Slows Your PC's Performance

Believe it or not, there is such a thing as too much protection. Running more than one antivirus program on your PC at once can lead to conflicts, severe reduction in performance, and other problems. If you are running more than one, uninstall the extra program(s). Although not every slow PC or malfunctioning antivirus software is due to multiple instances of antivirus, it is common. Antivirus software requires low-level access to your system, and if it detects another application that has access to the same sensitive areas of your system, it will flag that as malware. Both Microsoft and third-party antivirus software developers agree, one is all you need. If for some reason you do want to keep two installed, make sure only one is active at a time. Usually, an icon in the system tray is a good indicator



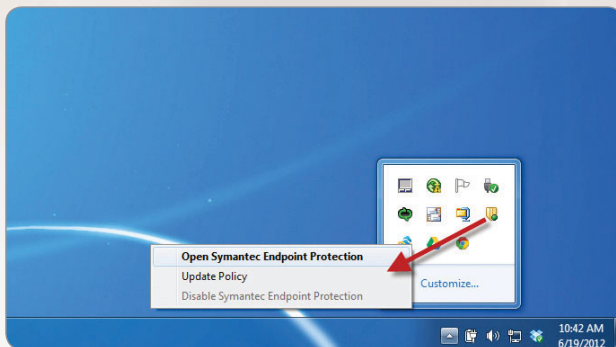
- ▲ One of the best ways to avoid problems with your security software is to make sure that you keep it up-to-date.

that an antivirus application is running. Right-click the extra program(s) and exit or disable them.

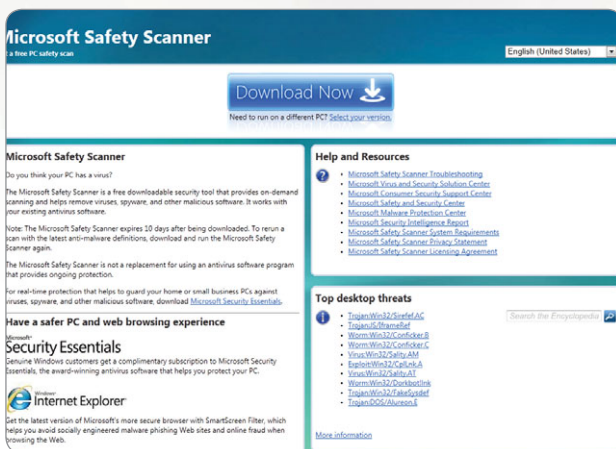
You Suspect That Your PC Is Infected, But Antivirus & Antispyware Scans Find Nothing

The first thing you want to do is make sure your antivirus and antispyware software is fully updated. Typically, these programs check for updates prior to running, but a failed connection to the Internet can prevent the updates from downloading. Another tactic is to try running an alternative antispyware scanner. While we recommend running only one antivirus program at once, you can run several antispyware applications without experiencing any system-crippling side effects (only let them scan one at a time).

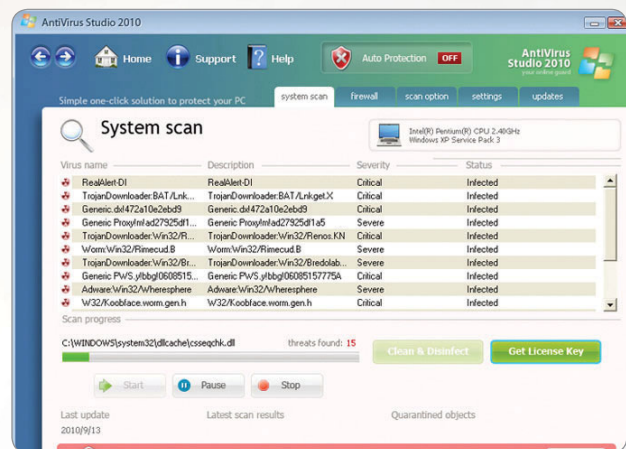
Often, a virus or malware program can keep your antivirus and antispyware applications from running,



Right-click the icon in your System Tray to view your security software options.



Microsoft Security Scanner might be able to catch problems your current security software missed.



This is what one of the more convincing rogue antivirus software looks like.

and can prevent you from installing alternatives or browsing the Web for answers. If this is the case, you need help. If you can get access to another PC, you can install the infected hard drive as a secondary drive and use the other computer to run a virus scan on it.

If you have Internet access and you can install applications, you can try the Microsoft Safety Scanner by visiting tinyurl.com/3r24p7e and clicking Download.

Avoid Rogue Antivirus Software

Rogue antivirus software tends to first notify you of problems while you're browsing an infected Web page. Because these applications are modeled after actual antivirus applications, they can look very convincing. The best way to avoid being duped is to get to know your current antivirus and antispyware software. If the alerts you're seeing say something to the effect of "your system is infected, scan now" but they aren't coming from your trusted software, it's likely a

spoof. Don't click anything. Press ALT-F4 to close the popup and Web page, then run your current antivirus software; then scan with your trusted antispyware application to determine if there really is an infection. Beware, if you click a button to scan or even to dismiss the message, the rogue software may download and install on your PC, commonly disabling your existing antivirus applications in the process.

If you suspect that you have rogue antivirus software installed on your system and are unable to run your current antivirus and antispyware applications, then install the infected hard drive as a secondary drive and run a virus scan using the other computer.

Keep Safe

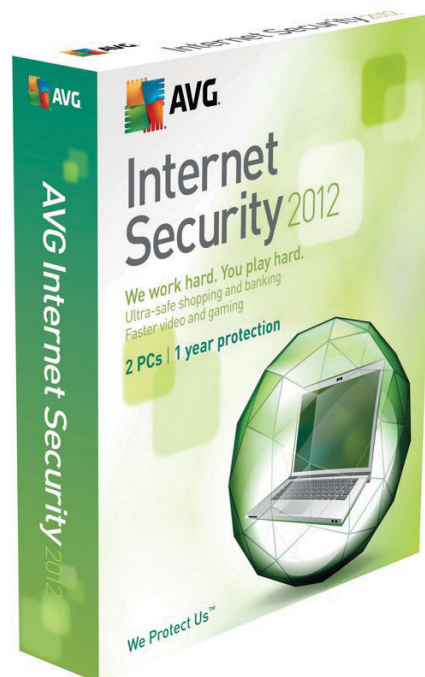
Security software is your first and last defense against malware, phishing sites, and hackers. Take good care of your antivirus and antispyware software and it will take good care of you.

\$49.99
www.avg.com

AVG Internet Security 2012

AVG (formerly Grisoft) doesn't think you should have to constantly look over your shoulder when browsing the Web. With AVG Internet Security 2012, you get peace of mind and a whole lot more.

- AVG Enhanced Firewall and AVG Identity Protection keep you safe when banking and shopping online
- Integrated antivirus, anti-malware, and antispyware to keep your PC clean and running in tip-top shape
- Speeds up your online video viewing
- Only scans your PC when the computer is idle to avoid slowing down your system
- Keeps itself up-to-date automatically, so you can set it and forget it

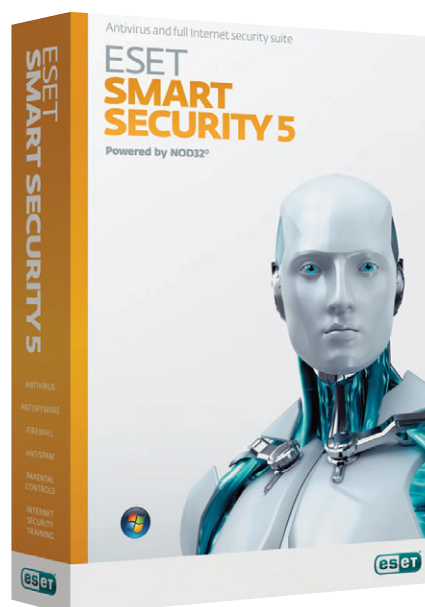


\$59.99
www.eset.com

ESET Smart Security 5

ESET's Smart Security 5 utilizes an exclusive heuristics scanning technology as the foundation of the software.

- Prevents attacks and infections with ThreatSense technology, which identifies and deals with unknown types of malware before you even know they're there
- Runs in the background, so you can enjoy using your computer without experiencing any slowdown
- Takes a minimalistic approach to alerts; it'll only bother you for important stuff
- Updates automatically, so your PC stays protected at all times



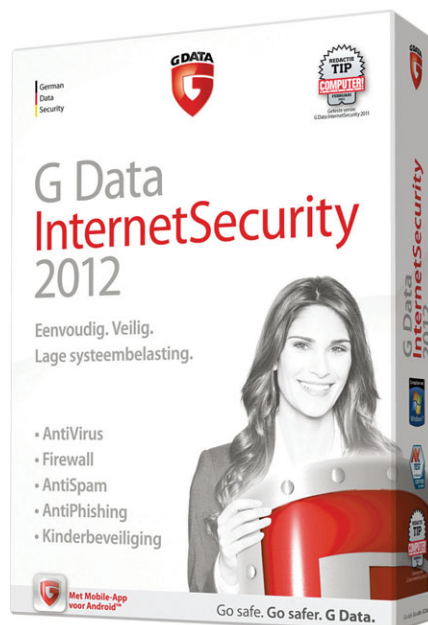
\$39.99

www.gdatasoftware.com

G Data AntiVirus 2012

Bochum Germany-based G Data has been in the business of protecting computers since 1985, and the firm's AntiVirus 2012 suite is its most effective software yet.

- Self-learning fingerprinting and whitelisting capabilities speed scans and free up additional memory
- Idle scan option initiates scans when you're away from the PC, so you don't experience any resource constraints
- Feature optimized behavior blocking to detect and eliminate unknown malware types
- Image Backup module lets you back up and restore your PC
- Enhanced Outlook plugin can detect and block viruses and spam in your email inbox



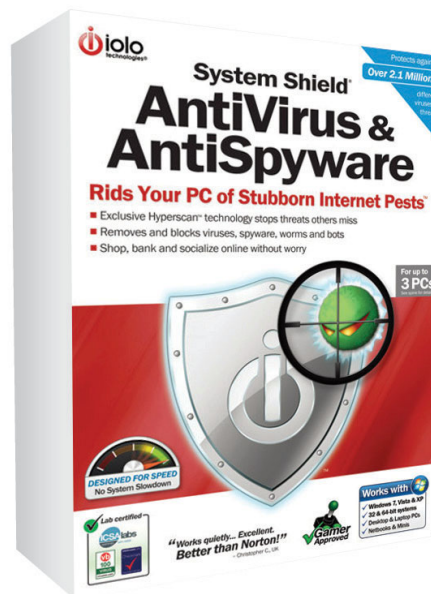
\$29.99

www.iolo.com

Iolo System Shield AntiVirus & AntiSpyware

If you think that security software often gets in the way while you're trying to get work done, then Iolo's performance-focused approach should impress you.

- Secures your PC against more than 2.1 million threats, including viruses, spyware, worms, Trojans, rootkits, bots, keyloggers, adware, tracking software, polymorphic attacks, password theft, identity theft, and more
- Discovers and eliminates infections and blocks future attacks from occurring
- Sentient Technology uses artificial intelligence heuristics to find malware *before* it causes irreparable damage to your PC, identity, or sensitive data

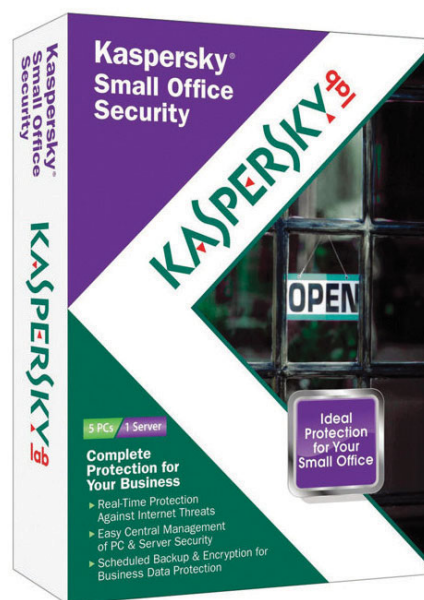


\$199.99
usa.kaspersky.com

Kaspersky Small Office Security

Small and home office users ask a lot of their PCs and as a result, they need security software that takes their unique needs into account.

- Includes Internet threat protection, multiple protection tools for securing your sensitive digital data
- Protects your system from both known and many unknown Web-based threats
- The control panel on one PC can be used to manage the security settings for all your PCs and servers
- Employees can be given access to a Web-Access Management portal.
- Includes scheduled and automatic backup, encrypted file storage, and PC clean-up utilities

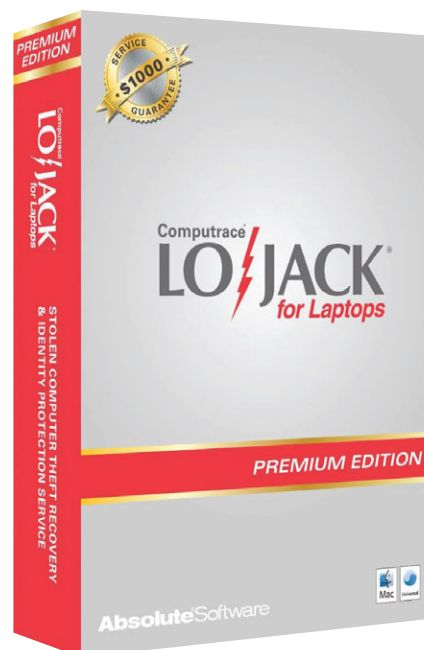


\$54.99
www.lojack.com

LoJack For Laptops Premium

Absolute Software's LoJack is all about making sure your lost or stolen laptop finds its way back to you.

- Your laptop continually connects with the LoJack monitoring center, securely and in the background
- If your laptop is lost or stolen, the LoJack Recovery Team uses geolocation technologies to track it down
- Notifies local law enforcement about where your property can be found
- Lets you remotely lock your laptop against unauthorized access or remotely wipe sensitive data, photos, financial information, stored passwords, and more
- LoJack Service Guarantee provides up to \$1,000 if LoJack can't recover your PC or remotely delete data



\$59.99

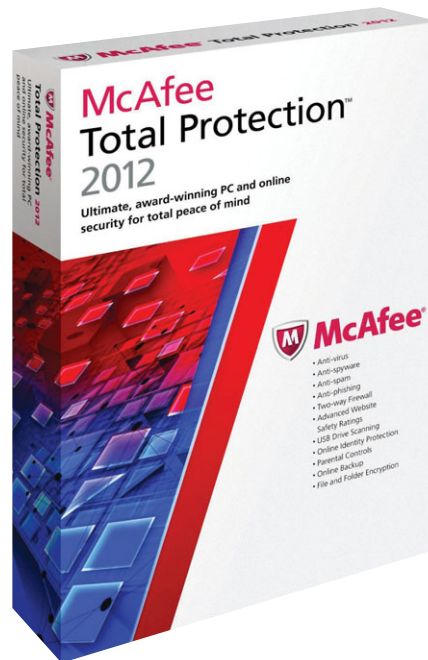
www.mcafee.com

McAfee Total Protection 2012

With a name like Total Protection, you know McAfee's offering is going to be comprehensive. This software suite includes all the malware-protections found in McAfee AntiVirus Plus 2012, and McAfee Internet Security 2012, as well as a few extras.

- Includes up to 2GB of online backup space
- McAfee Home Network Defense technology blocks access to your sensitive data even if data thieves are using the same Wi-Fi network
- Features improved storage encryption and an enhanced anti-phishing module.
- Lets you share links on social networks safely and securely, and the built-in URL (uniform resource locator) shortener lets you tweet concise links that won't lead to malware or phishing sites

McAfee®



\$79.99

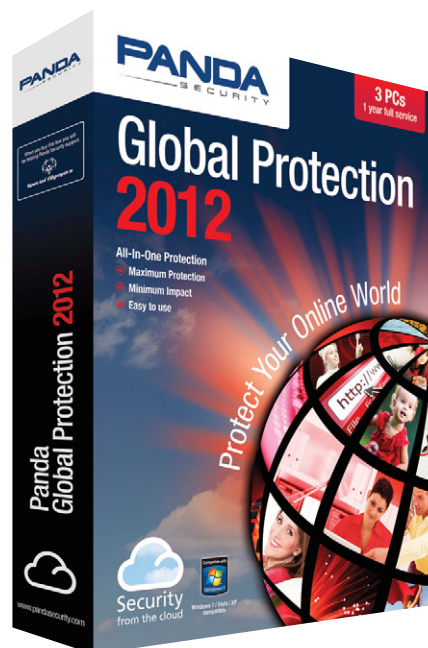
www.pandasecurity.com

Panda Global Protection 2012

If you're looking for an all-in-one security suite, look no further than Panda Global Protection 2012.

- Uses Panda cloud technology to secure your PC without interrupting your work
- Keeps your data secure and lets you browse the Web without fear of infections, spyware, rootkits, hackers, fraud, identity theft, and cybercriminals
- Improved virus protection and enhanced firewall
- USB Vaccine secures your portable drives, and a virtual keyboard lets you enter for passwords securely
- Remote PC access, file shredding, encryption, a home network manager, and expanded parental control
- Panda SafeCD lets you scrub malware from your PC even if you can't boot into Windows

PANDA SECURITY

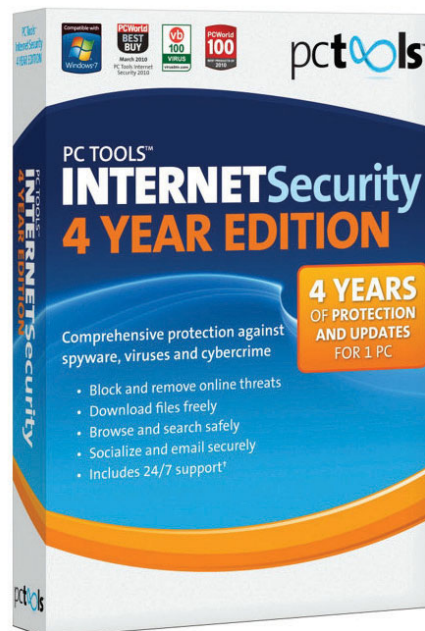


\$59.99
www.pctools.com

PC Tools Internet Security

PC Tools Internet Security is a full-featured suite designed to protect your PC in everything for which you use it.

- Spyware Doctor keeps you safe from tracking software and browser hijackers
- Antivirus component blocks malware, hackers, and data-stealing utilities
- An Internet security component protects your PC from phishing scams, emails that contain false offers or credit card scams, hackers trying to gain access to your PC, and malicious programs that distribute your passwords and private identity data to cybercriminals
- Also detects and removes difficult-to-find rootkits and other threats hiding in unlikely places on your PC

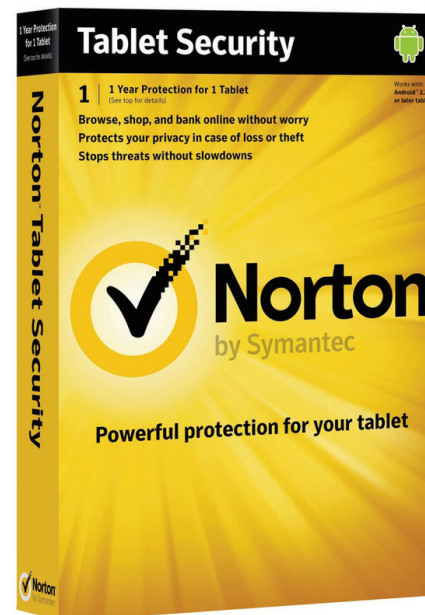


\$39.99
www.symantec.com

Symantec Norton Tablet Security

You love your tablet, and as you use apps and the Web more and more, the odds increase that you'll be exposed to a bevy of Web-borne malware. Put a padlock on your tablet with Symantec's Norton Tablet Security.

- Installs on your Android-based tablet and lets you recover and remotely lock a lost or stolen device
- Displays personalized messages to inform whoever finds your tablet how best to return it to you.
- Can take a quick photo of anyone using your tablet (for those tablets equipped with a webcam)
- Blocks phishing sites, secures your data when you're on an open Wi-Fi network, and automatically scans apps and app updates



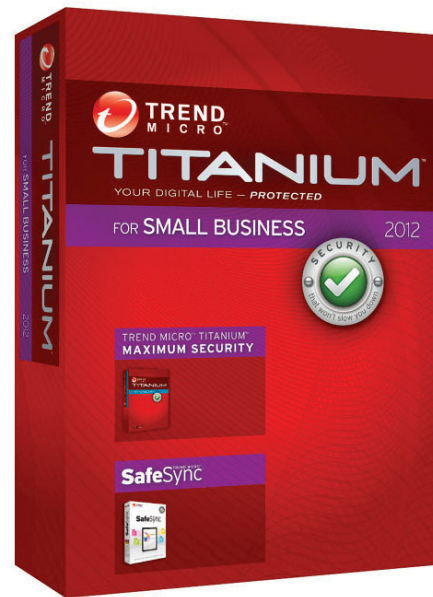
\$149.99

www.trendmicro.com

Trend Micro Titanium For Small Business

When it comes to securing the PCs you use for your small business, any old security software just won't do.

- Eliminates viruses and other online threats *before* they wreak havoc on your system and network
- Up to 100GB of secure cloud storage for your sensitive business documents
- Protection from infected links on social networks
- Security for your tablet and smartphone
- Secure Erase permanently deletes files
- Remotely lock files in the event of a stolen laptop or tablet, and more
- Protect up to ten Windows or Mac devices



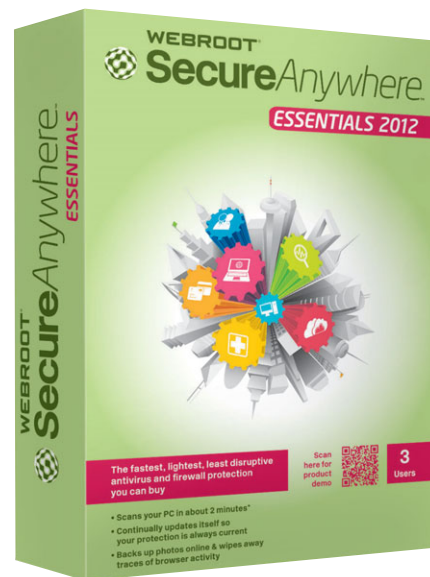
\$59.99

www.webroot.com

Webroot Secure Anywhere Essentials

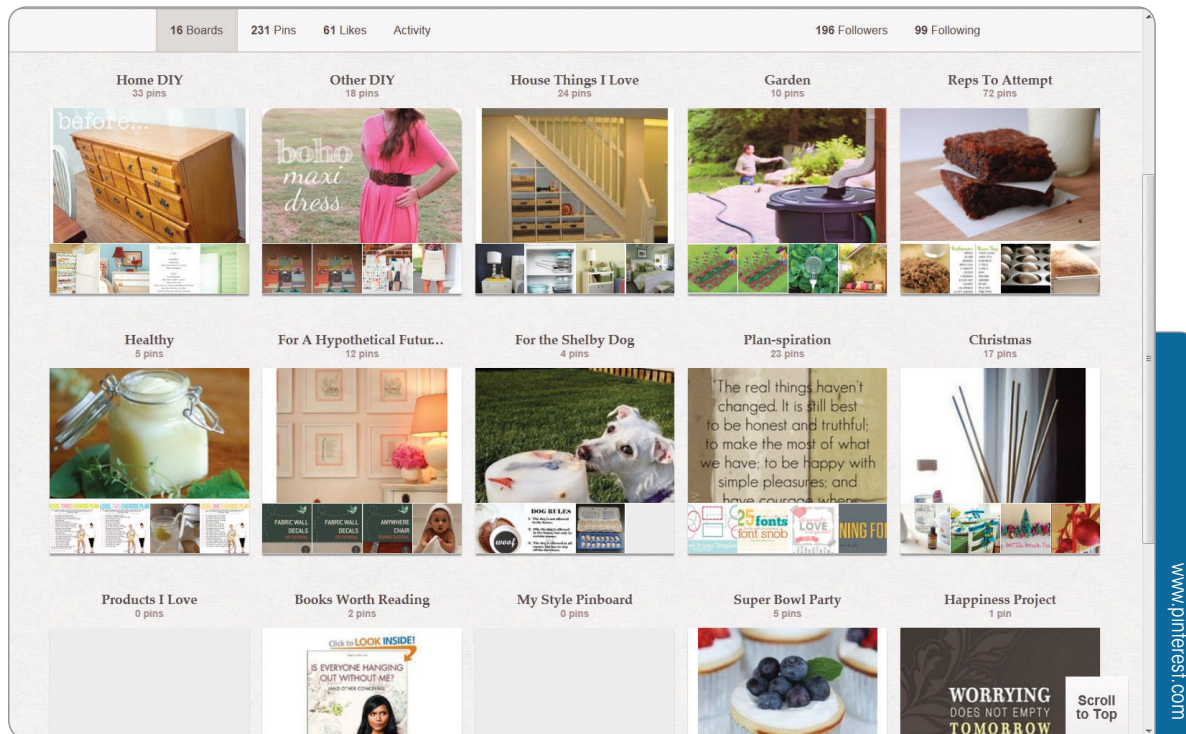
Secure your computing experience without sacrificing performance or taking out a second mortgage: Check out Webroot's Secure Anywhere Essentials.

- Comes with three user licenses
- Uses Webroot's cloud-based technology to ensure that you're protected the moment a threat is discovered, anywhere in the world
- Scan times as brisk as two minutes
- Password, credit card, and confidential file encryption
- Blocks viruses, Trojans, spyware, rootkits, and other malware
- Up to 30GB of cloud-based storage (10GB per user) for storing sensitive documents and media



Tips & Tricks

Get Social



Pinterest is a popular social networking tool for organization your favorite ideas and designs.

Over the course of this year, we've covered how you can use social networking powerhouses Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Foursquare to improve the marketability of your business. However, the social networking scene changes fast—remember how popular MySpace once was—and there are a variety of other social networking options. Here, we'll examine a few up-and-comers.

Pinterest

pinterest.com

This website lets you create a virtual “pinboard” where you can

post images of the things you think are interesting. To organize information, you categorize the images into pinboards that feature a common theme. Your pinboards can also include short notes and links to the original source of the photo. The social aspect comes from the fact that you can follow other users to see what they post, as well as re-post pins on your page. It would be a smart move for any company that design products to create a Pinterest page, because they can provide examples of how the merchandise can be used and direct customers to your website.

LIVESTRONG

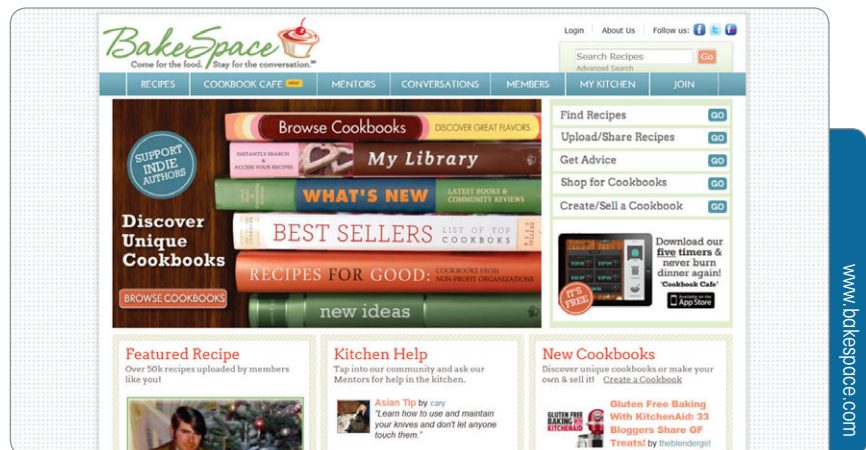
www.livestrong.com

With LIVESTRONG, you'll have access to fitness, nutrition, and health resources to help you live a better, healthier life. Within the website, you'll be able to determine ideal calorie intake for your lifestyle, track fitness activities, and monitor food intake to help you meet your weight goals. If you're looking to promote healthy living within your company, LIVESTRONG is a powerful tool that will can people to achieve their daily goals.

BakeSpace

www.bakespace.com

As you may have guessed from the name, BakeSpace is a website where members can post, search, and swap recipes. You'll also be able to follow what your friends are cooking, as well as catalog what's in your kitchen. BakeSpace is a good fit for companies that make or sell products for use in the kitchen, because you can share recipes and cooking techniques that highlight your products. You could also use BakeSpace to socialize with culinary enthusiasts.

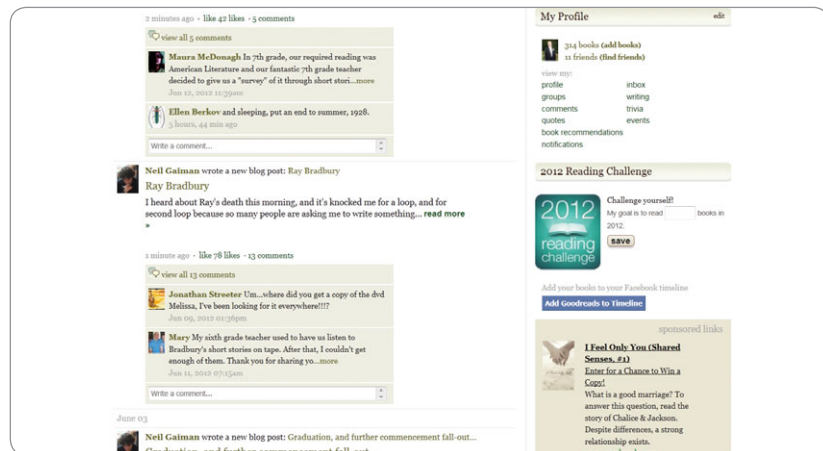


BakeSpace is a place where you can share your favorite recipes.

Goodreads

www.goodreads.com

Goodreads is a place where bookworms can share their thoughts on books and list the titles they are reading. Goodreads members can also sign up to follow authors, so they can keep up to date with what's going on with their favorite writers. Goodreads users can keep a list of the books they've read, are currently reading, and books they plan to read. The format is ideal for publishers and writers looking to meet readers and market material.

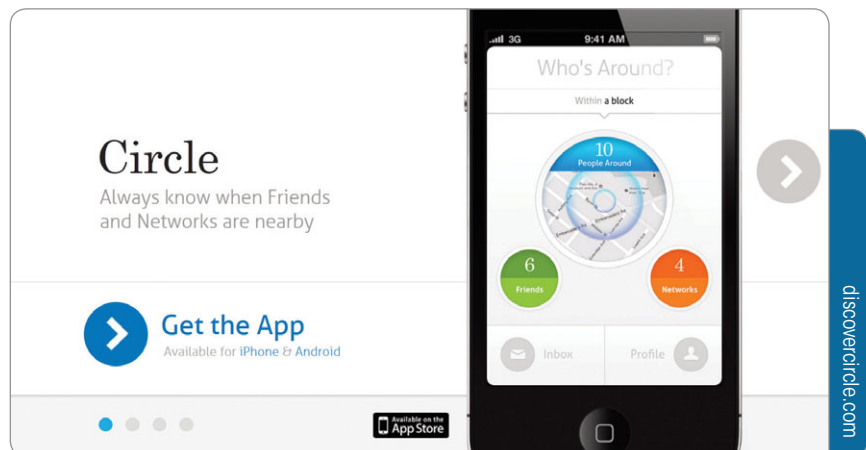


With Goodreads, you can keep up with your favorite writers and manage your reading selections.

Circle

discovercircle.com

Circle is a social networking service that works with Facebook to notify you when your Facebook friends are nearby, and vice versa. You can toggle your public visibility on and off, so people will only see you when you want them to. Circle can be configured to only display people from your networks, such as college, work, or hometown, so you'll only be alerted to those you want to see. This is ideal for people who want to know when their friends are nearby. You can adjust the distance setting from within in the same building to up to 30 miles away.



Circle can alert you when Facebook friends are nearby.

Can't Get Enough



like us, follow us, circle us.

A PC For Your College Student

Expert Buying Advice For Parents



The ThinkPad 420s comes with a 2ndGeneration Intel Core processor and a 14-inch screen.

A PC is a must-have for any college student, and it's important that you select one that will be able to handle all the tasks your student will need to accomplish. If you're sending your student off to college soon, read our buying tips to find out the key things you'll need to consider.

Laptop Vs. Desktop

In most cases, laptops are going to be the form factor of choice over a desktop computer, because students often need to work on *and* off campus. That said, there are areas of study, such as engineering and graphics design, where students may need a high-end PC that will handle the powerful software they may be required to use. It's possible for a laptop to meet those

high-end requirements—but such a system may be outside of your price range. Normally, desktop PCs are more affordable than laptops with the same processing power and video capabilities, and the former may better fit your budget.

Weighing The Options

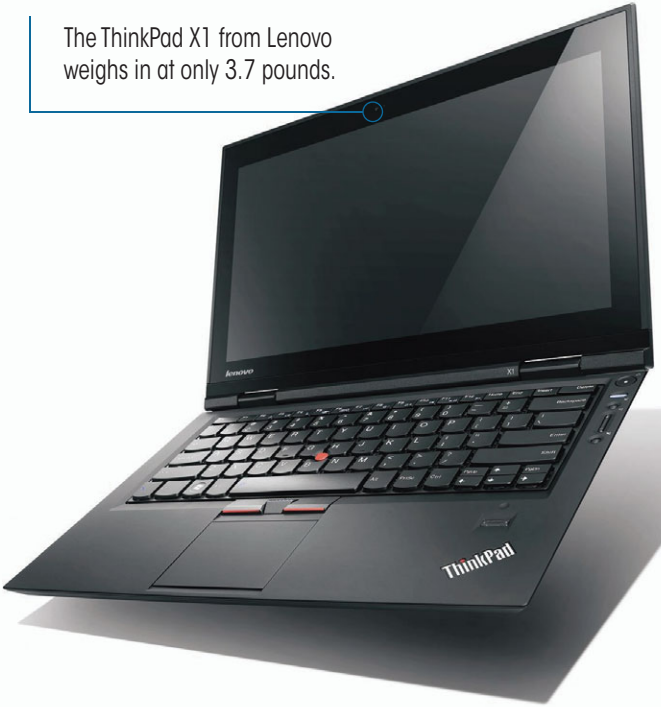
If you're investing in a laptop, you'll want to discuss how important portability and performance will be when on campus. Generally speaking, a larger, heavier laptop will pack more performance than a lightweight model, because there's more space for hardware inside the bigger model. If a student's primary usage will consist mainly of accessing the Internet, using a word processing

application, and streaming video, a lightweight notebook should be up to the task. On the other hand, those that will regularly be creating presentations, editing images, and doing serious multitasking may need to sacrifice some portability to get the kind of performance they need.

Features

Some features may be more important than others, depending on the types of tasks you perform. We'll briefly cover some of the key considerations.

Processor. Among modern CPUs, the biggest performance difference is the number of cores (for an AMD processor) or threads (for an Intel processor) that are built into the pro-



The ThinkPad X1 from Lenovo weighs in at only 3.7 pounds.



The Asus Zenbook can be configured with an SSD for fast application boot-up.

cessor. The more that are available, the faster applications installed on the system will run.

Memory. Most current PCs will include at least 4GB of memory, but if your student will regularly have multiple applications open at once, such as a word processing program, an instant message application, and a social networking site, it's a good idea to invest in a PC with 6GB or 8GB of memory, as the system can better handle multitasking.

SSD vs. hard drive. A laptop will likely only have one internal storage device: an SSD (solid state drive) or an HDD (hard disk drive). SSDs are much faster and use less energy than an HDD, while hard drives usually offer more storage

space. Those that value speed when loading applications and the operating system should go with an SSD. People with large collections of multimedia may prefer an HDD for the extra storage space.

Ports and graphics. Will your child be regularly connecting the laptop or desktop PC to an HDTV, perhaps in order to stream movies and other Web content? If so, you should look for a system with an HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface) output. Students who will need to connect a variety of peripherals—such as a printer, Web cam, or charger for a mobile phone and tablet—should ensure that the laptop or desktop PC offers enough free USB ports. ●

Important Choices

- 1 Does the student need a laptop or desktop PC?
- 2 What types of tasks will be performed on the PC?
- 3 Will it need to meet a specific set of specifications?
- 4 Does the system offer enough outputs and connectivity for the peripherals the student plans to connect to it?



Find It Online



FamilyFun

familyfun.go.com

The kids are home and it's time for some family fun—and it's up to you to figure out what that fun will be. That's where Disney's FamilyFun comes in: The site has recipes, crafts, and printable games that will have everyone cooking, crafting, playing, and generally not sitting on the couch in no time. Click the Summer tab for some recipes and activities that are best enjoyed in hot summer weather.

Autoblog

www.autoblog.com

If you want to keep your finger on the pulse of the auto industry, Autoblog should be at the top of your list. News on new and forthcoming cars abound, and there are enough reviews to satisfy big-time enthusiasts. After all, as Autoblog says, "We obsessively cover the auto industry." One site feature that stands out is the Quick Scan View tab. Click that, and you'll see snapshots of the latest blog posts, videos, and other entries. It's an easy way to navigate the site's trove of auto news treasure.

Deliciously Organized

deliciouslyorganized.blogspot.com

Organization tips and recipes for healthy dishes make this blog a must for your Favorites list. The site has excellent photos of pepperoncini-laden sandwiches, tomato appetizers, smoothies, and more.

Kovels

www.kovels.com

Now that you've wrapped up your latest antiquing trip, it's time to answer the big question: Were these good deals? Kovels may be able help you with the answers. The site, which offers free and premium memberships, has tons of information about antiques, including price guides. Enjoy the photos of antiques and don't forget to stop by the forums.

Merriam-Webster Word Of The Day

www.merriam-webster.com/word-of-the-day

Get your day off to a good start with a new word each day from Merriam-Webster. Each definition includes audio, so you can learn how to pronounce the word. Definitions also include examples and, in many cases, related facts and etymology. Head to Merriam-Webster's main page to find words that are being used (or abused) in the news. The main page also has a

list of popular words (based on searches at the site) for the past 24 hours and seven days. Naturally, the page also includes quick access to the Merriam-Webster dictionary and thesaurus.

MSN Games

zone.msn.com

The Web is awash in games—many of which stink. MSN brings some of the best to the surface. Sign up for a free account and browse the site's categories (or search by keyword). Some of the games are played online, while others will need to be downloaded to your PC. Although MSN has a good reputation, we encourage anyone who connects to the Internet (and particularly people who play online games) to protect their PCs and themselves with a physical firewall, software firewall, antivirus and software updates, and good old-fashioned caution.

What's That Bug?

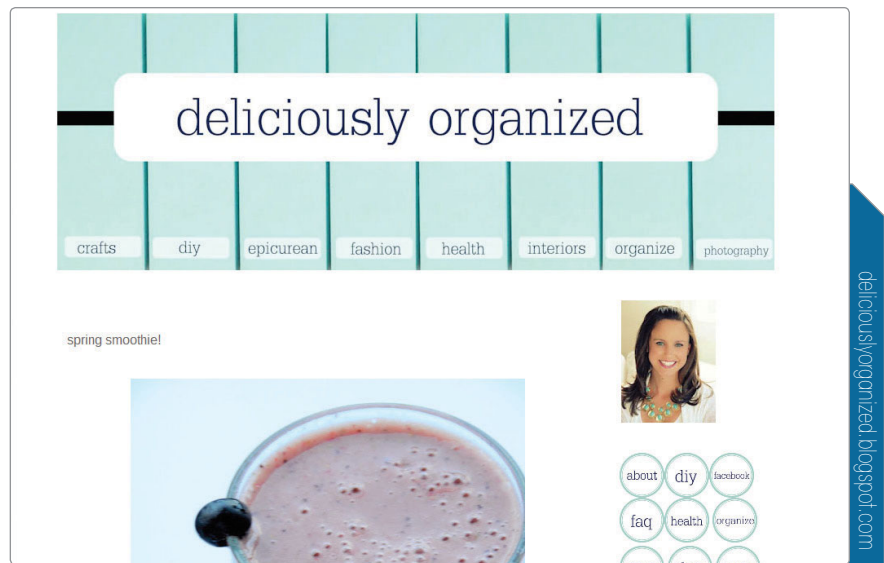
www.whats-that-bug.com

Here, Daniel Marlos provides information that helps you answer an age-old question: What's that bug? Check out the Top 10 list and the extensive catalog of pictures and descriptions of insects. A Most Liked section on the main page highlights some of Bugman's (always sensible, often hilarious) responses to readers.

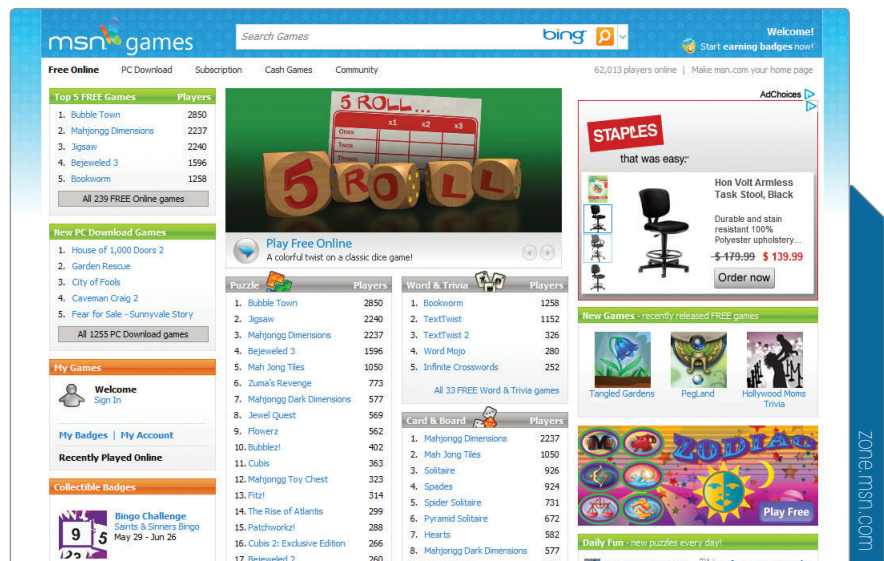
Young House Love

www.younghouselove.com

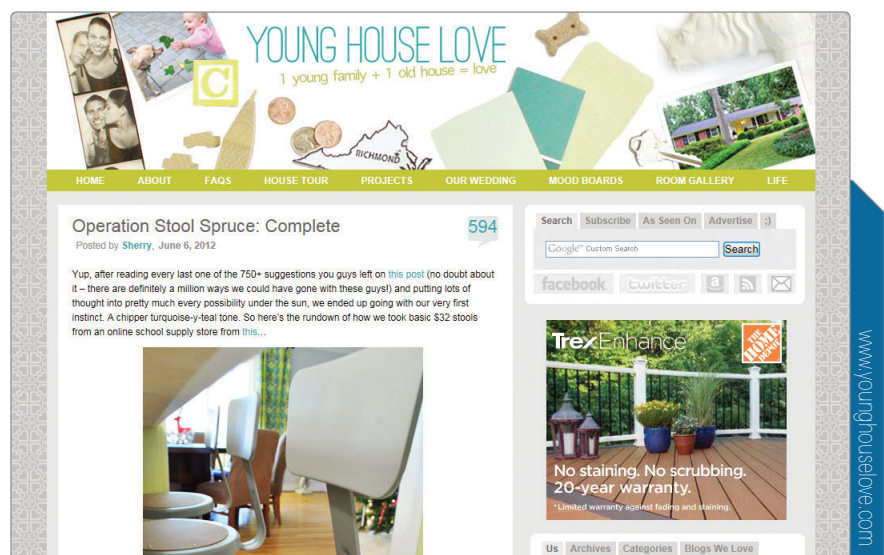
Follow these young homeowners as they undertake one home improvement project after another in their Richmond, Va. house. If you're planning projects of your own, you can pick up some tricks here, but the site is a good destination for anyone with even a little interest in home decorating. The couple have several related blogs and galleries, so it's easy to sink more time into browsing this site and its siblings than you mean to. ●



deliciouslyorganized.blogspot.com



zone.msn.com



www.younghouselove.com

Tips From The Help Desk

Common Tech Questions

Q My clients and friends are receiving spam that purports to be from my email address. I'm not sending these emails. How can I stop whoever is doing this?

A If your contacts are receiving emails ads from you, it likely means that the password for your email account is in the hands of a malicious user. The crook is probably using your email to spam everyone in your address book (and probably plenty of other people, as well). It's safe to assume that any important personal information in your email archives (such as emails containing passwords to other sites you visit) are exposed, as well. You some cleaning up to do, not to mention explaining the problem to your clients and colleagues.

The first step is to try to log into your email account. If get a "Wrong Password" error, it means the crook changed your password. You may have lost access to account permanently. Contact your email service to see if it can stop the crook from sending more spam and ask it to restore your account. You may find yourself needing to create a new email account.

If the crook hasn't changed your password, enter your account's settings and change your password immediately. With the malicious user locked out, you can now contact people to explain the situation and assure them that you have control of your account again. Checking your account's Sent folder may give you an idea of who your spam emails went to.

It's important to change all your passwords if you suspect that your email password has been compromised. A

hacker can use your email to get passwords to your other accounts.

Q My PC is suddenly running very slow. Opening programs, surfing the Internet—everything takes much longer than it did last week. When I check the Performance tab of the Windows Task Manager (press CTRL-ALT-DELETE and choose Task Manager), the CPU usage is at the top of the graph. What's happening, and how can I return my computer to its original speed?

A Several problems can lead to processor or memory bottlenecks, including viruses, misbehaving programs, and background processes, among others. Start your troubleshooting by asking yourself what changed on your PC shortly before it slowed down. Did you install any programs? If so, remove them and see if the system speeds up. Did you visit websites you don't regularly visit? Run a full system scan with your security software. (In fact, this is a good step to take even if your surfing habits haven't changed.) Next, update Windows (click the Start button, enter Windows Update in the Search field and click it the word when it appears). If these solutions don't solve the problem, consider restoring the PC to its condition at an earlier date (before the slowdown). To do this, click Start, enter "restore" in the search field and click Restore Your Computer To An Earlier Time. Follow the on-screen prompts, and you (should) soon have a PC that operates just the way it did before slowing down. ●



It's important to change all your passwords if you suspect that your email password has been comprised. A hacker can use your email to get passwords to your other accounts.

CREATE A STRONG PASSWORD

Most of us have learned not to tape passwords to our monitors, but surveys consistently find that many people still use weak passwords that are quickly broken by hacking software. If names, dates, or “password” are all that is between a malicious user and your account, you may be sharing your data with a hacker.

The trick to creating a good password is to create a phrase that you’ll remember and then modify it by following these three rules-of-thumb:

- ✓ Make sure your password has eight or more characters. Don’t use a single word; hacking software will use dictionaries and name databases in multiple languages.
- ✓ Use upper- and lowercase characters.
- ✓ Add numbers and symbols. Rather than replace a letter with a number (replacing A with 4, for example), put the number in a place that isn’t significant to you.

Once you have created a password, test its strength at <https://www.microsoft.com/security/pc-security/password-checker.aspx>.

Of course, even strong passwords may fall into the hands of a hacker who breaks into a website that you use. Retailers and social media sites are common targets for attacks that, when successful, reap crooks tons of customer information—including passwords, in some cases. If you use the same password for every account you have, the hacker now has access to all of your accounts. Minimize your risk by using several passwords (ideally, a different password for each account).

Also, don’t underestimate the importance of a strong password for your email account. A hacker who has access to your email may be able to click the “Forgot Your Password” link on other sites you use to have your passwords for those sites sent to your email, where he can see them. Protect your email with a strong password.



Retailers and social media sites are common targets for attacks that, when successful, reap crooks tons of customer information—including passwords, in some cases.

BUYER’S GUIDE TOPICS

Each Smart Computing issue includes tons of tips and tricks for buying, maintaining, and troubleshooting computers and consumer electronics. Each issue also includes Issue Topics, in which we explore particular tech topics in several thorough articles. You’ll find installation and troubleshooting advice in these pages, as well as tips for getting better performance. Below is a list of topics from the previous year. You can access all of our archived articles at www.smartcomputing.com.

August	2011	Mobile Computing
September	2011	Technology Troubleshooting Guide
October	2011	The Small Office Server
November	2011	Affordable Office Tech
December	2011	TuneUp Utilities 2012
January	2012	Upgrade Your Network
February	2012	Laptops & Security Software
March	2012	Inkjet Printers & Keyboards/Mice
April	2012	Desktops & Monitors
May	2012	Networking & Memory
June	2012	Tablets & Laser Printers
July	2012	Projectors & SSDs

Maintenance Basics

The PC Checklist

Just like a house, your computer needs some regular maintenance. In this article, we'll break down the things you should perform on a weekly, monthly, and yearly basis.



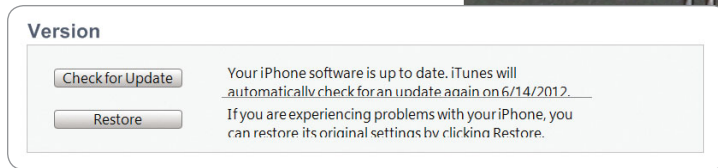
Weekly Checklist

- ☒ Empty the Window Recycle Bin
- ☒ Delete temporary Internet files
- ☒ Clear browsing history
- ☒ Delete unneeded files
- ☒ Back up important files
- ☒ Update your computer's antivirus, antispyware, and other security software
- ☒ Run a full security scan of the files on your PC

Weekly

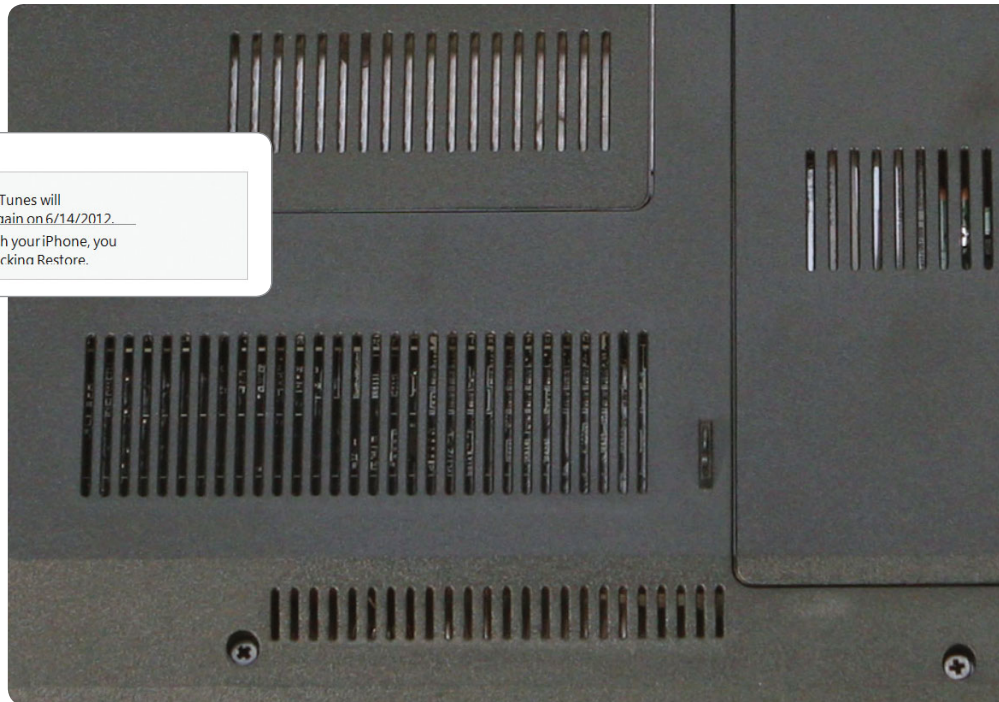
Regular maintenance of your PC can help to improve performance and reduce the file clutter that builds up over the course of the week. For instance, there will be more free space on your hard drive if you empty the Windows Recycle Bin, delete temporary Internet files, and remove other unnecessary files. Doing so can help speed up system performance.

Another essential task is backing up your files, assuming you don't have some type of automatic backup service, such as Carbonite's Home (\$59 per year; www.carbonite.com) that saves your files to the cloud as you create or edit them. If you don't have a service for backup, you should—at the very least—back up your critical files once a week. To protect your PCs, you should also update the malware definitions for your security software and run a full virus scan. Most security software tools allow you to automate this process, but you'll need to ensure that the computer will be on when the scan is scheduled to run.



Every month or so, check for updates on your favorite applications and hardware.

Use a can of compressed air to remove dust from the vents in your computer.



Monthly

It's smart to check for updates specific to the applications and hardware on your PC at least once a month. For example, driver updates often include bug fixes and patches that can improve the functionality of your PC's hardware. Key drivers to check for include your system's graphics processor, network card, and audio devices, as these will change the most frequently. Some components, such as the processor, memory, and hard drive/SSD (Solid State Drive), don't require drivers to operate.

A quick cleaning is also a smart task to undertake on a monthly basis. For example, you can take a can of compressed air and blow out the dust that has accumulated inside your computer's fans, which will help to keep temperatures down on your desktop PC or laptop. A can of compressed air is also good for cleaning out keyboards, because you'll be able to blow out debris underneath the keys. Wipe down the exterior of your PC with a damp rag (not dripping wet, because we don't want any water to touch the internal electronics) to clean off the dust. If your monitor seems dusty, invest in a monitor cleaning spray and a micro-fiber cloth to get the screen sparkling again.

Monthly Checklist

- ☒ Check for application updates
- ☒ Run Windows Update
- ☒ Check for driver updates
- ☒ Clean exterior of desktop PC or laptop
- ☒ Blow dust out of fans and keyboard
- ☒ Wipe down monitor

Yearly

Take some time to review your subscriptions and renew any software, such as your backup service, security software license, and services that require a yearly license. If any of your subscriptions are nearing an end date, make sure to renew them.

Yearly Checklist

- ☒ Check annual software subscriptions
- ☒ Renew security software license

Shore Up Your Defenses

Create Strong Passwords

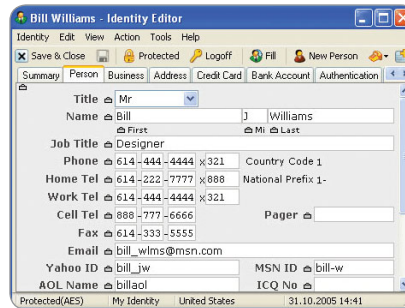
It's not uncommon to develop a love-hate relationship with your passwords. After all, you need them on a daily basis to access your work; shop online; secure your wireless network; pay your bills electronically; and post photos, comments, and videos on your social networks. Unless you're keen to hand cybercriminals the keys to your online persona, however, you need to create strong passwords. Read on for tips on how to reinforce your online identity with unique and impenetrable passwords.

Essential Security

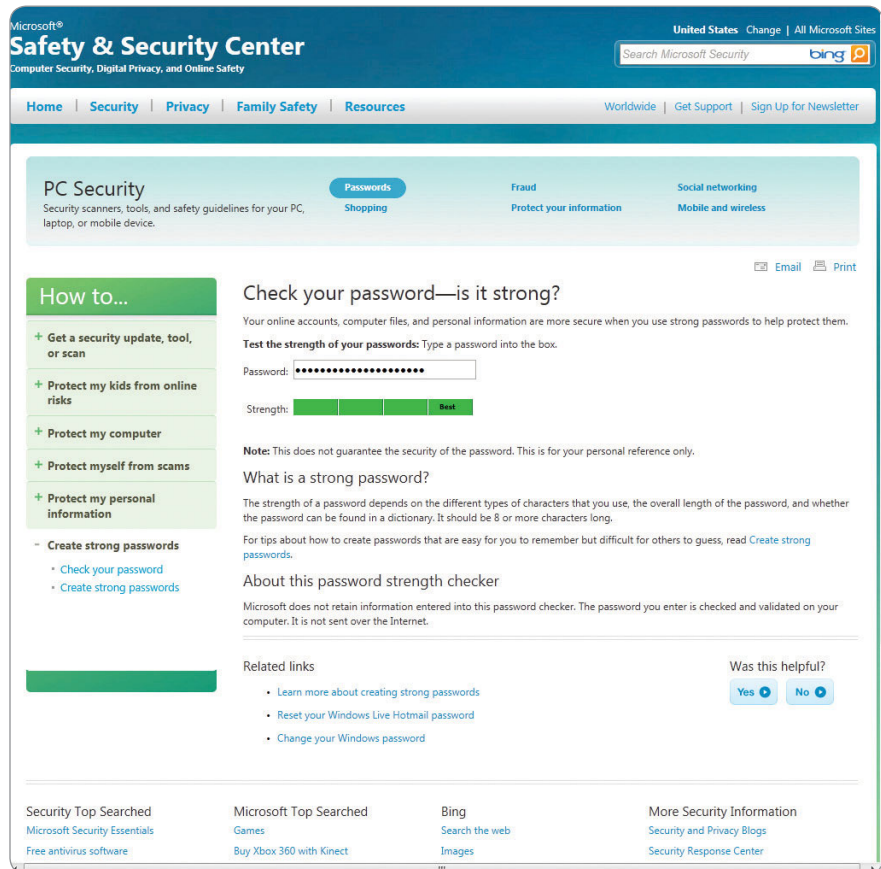
Passwords are the only things that separate your digital identity from who you really are. Thus, you should consider their creation very carefully. It's important never to share passwords and to resist the urge to write them down. The ban on sharing passwords should also extend to instant messaging applications, email, text messages, and any other form of digital communication that could be intercepted or unknowingly passed along.

Making your passwords memorable but hard to guess is also an important tactic. One way to do this is to include numbers that are significant to you, but not easily guessable for others—even those who have access to information readily available on the Internet, such as your address, birthdates, children's birthdates, and marriage dates. For instance, choose the length of your favorite song, the street address of your favorite coffee shop, or the flight number from a recently successful business trip.

Following these simple rules is sure to make your passwords more secure, but don't make the mistake of making them forgettable. True, it's easier to re-



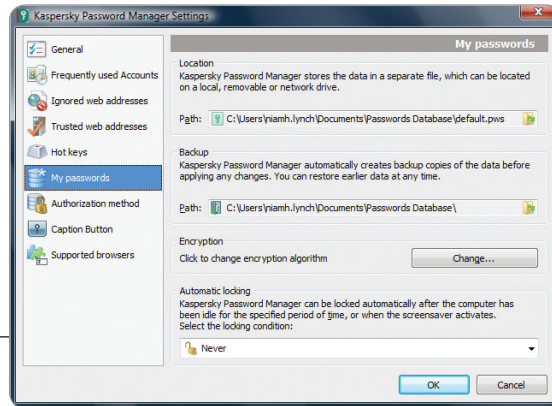
RoboForm's Identity Editor makes filling out Web forms quick and easy.



Microsoft's online password checker (<http://tinyurl.com/3qdmohy>) gives you immediate feedback on the strength of your passwords.

Passwords are the only things that separate your digital identity from who you really are, and as such, you should consider their creation very carefully.

Kaspersky Password Manager lets you select from multiple encryption algorithms.



One of the best ways to avoid online identity theft is to carefully consider which sites you log into.

cover a forgotten password than it is to recover from identity theft, but those password reset emails *also* represent security risks, especially if they're intercepted. That's where password managers can really help out. These utilities do most of the heavy lifting for you, forcing you to remember just one password (to the application itself).

Kaspersky Password Manager (\$24.95) features an encrypted vault for passwords and personal data, includes a random secure password generator, and lets you input passwords on a virtual keyboard to foil keylogger-type malware that can record your keystrokes. RoboForm Desktop 7 (\$29.95) is a secure pass-

word repository for your desktop that provides unlimited logins, identities, bookmarks, and more.

Password Managers

A password manager is a lightweight application that is capable of remembering all your passwords for you, logging you in automatically, and keeping your digital identity stowed safely out of cybercriminals' crosshairs.

Eliminate Web Worry

A strong password is a good start, but a better one is to simply avoid creating a user account altogether. For each of the Web services you patronize, ask yourself an important ques-

Characteristics Of A Strong Password

The strength or weakness of your passwords depends on several key factors. Follow these guidelines and your passwords will be able to stand up against even determined cybercriminals.

The longer the better.

Microsoft recommends that passwords need to be at least 14 characters long to be effective. Feel free to make your passwords even longer than that; each additional character reduces the chances a hacker will be able to guess your password.

Simple is synonymous with insecure. You know better than to make your password "12345," all lowercase letters, or a simple word you can find in the dictionary. Mix it up using symbols, numbers, and a combination of capitalized and lower-case letters.

Change is good. Think of your passwords as having a shelf life. You should change your passwords approximately four times a year or more to keep them fresh.

Don't make a master key.

No matter how strong your password is, if a cybercriminal is able to obtain it, you're in trouble. But you can limit the amount of damage he can inflict by using different passwords for your various online accounts.

tion: *Does this Web site really need to know who I am?* If the answer is no, then delete your old account or avoid creating one. The next time the site gets hacked and passwords go viral, you'll thank us. ●

Troubleshooting Reference: COMPUTERS



FEW THINGS ARE MORE FRUSTRATING than a computer that simply won't boot. When one of your primary means of communication, work, and entertainment is not functioning, it's not uncommon to feel isolated, unproductive, and bored. Here are a handful of tips to help get your PC booted and working again.

Start In Safe Mode

Assuming there's not a power issue (the PC is plugged in, turned on, and fans are spinning) then your boot up problem may be due to a faulty driver or other software conflict, which booting in Safe Mode can resolve. To do this, remove any device plugged into a

USB port, save your mouse and keyboard, empty your optical drive and then restart your computer. Press and hold the F8 key as the computer attempts to boot (prior to the Windows Logo showing up). On the Advanced Boot Options screen, select Safe Mode and press ENTER. If your computer boots up, then you know something driver-related is the problem, so take this opportunity to uninstall anything that might have become a problem, and then attempt to restart.

Restore Your System

To access System Restore on a PC that won't boot, you'll need a Windows 7 installation disc. With

your PC powered on, open the optical drive and put the disc in, and then close the drive tray. Restart your computer and then press any key when prompted to boot from the disc. You may need to change the boot options in the BIOS (Basic Input Output System) so that the PC boots from the optical drive first (press DELETE or F1 to access the BIOS during boot). When you see the Windows 7 Install Now option, click the Repair Your Computer option instead, from the bottom of the screen. Then just select the Windows installation you want to fix and follow the onscreen prompts to try the various system recovery options. ●

Prevention

The best way to avoid problems is to perform some regular maintenance on your system. Occasionally unplug your PC and take it outside to blow the dust off the vents, fans, power supply, graphics card, and CPU heatsink with a can of compressed air. This will keep you PC well-ventilated and reduce overall system temperatures. It'll also dramatically diminish the chances that your PC components will fail due to excessive heat.

Fix-It Checklist

It's helpful to have a few things on hand when your PC won't start. Here's a short checklist that'll help you solve the problem.

- ✓ The Windows installation disc you used to set up your computer
- ✓ Spare mouse and keyboard
- ✓ Another PC with an active Internet connection
- ✓ Driver discs that came with your components or PC
- ✓ Phillips-head screw driver
- ✓ Can of compressed air
- ✓ USB flash drive

Troubleshooting Reference:

TABLETS & SMARTPHONES



TABLETS AND SMARTPHONES ARE powerful little machines, but when they malfunctioning, all that productivity and entertainment comes to a halt. But don't fret; in most cases you can recover your devices with little effort. Simply follow these basic troubleshooting tips to get your shiny slab of glass back in working order.

The Tablet Is Frozen

Your tablet or smartphone might freeze or hang for a variety of reasons, from a faulty app to a dearth of available memory. Before you can determine what caused the problem, however, you need to regain control of it. If you're using an iOS-based device, then the first thing you should do is press

and hold the Sleep/Wake button until you see the Slide To Power Off slider, then swipe it to shut it down. If that fails, press the Sleep/Wake button and the Home button simultaneously until you see the screen go dark and display an Apple logo.

For most Android-based smartphones and tablets, a normal shut down procedure involves pressing and holding the power button and then tapping the shutdown option that pops up onscreen. If you don't see a shutdown option, you can force the operation by continuing to press and hold the power button until the unit shuts down or restarts.

Some Android tablets, including the Motorola Xoom, require a slightly dif-

ferent procedure. To perform a soft reset on a Xoom, press the power button and the Volume Up key simultaneously until the unit shuts off. Consult your manual for the proper procedures.

One Or More Apps Have Disappeared

Apps are the smartphone and tablet's best assets, but if you're ever unable to find one of your favorites, it might be because your device recently installed an operating system update that is incompatible with the app version you had previously installed. But don't worry, simply return to the App Store (iOS) or Google Play (or other Android app source) and reinstall the missing app. ●

Prevention

The best way to avoid problems with your mobile device is to perform some regular maintenance on it. Start by always keeping your tablet and smartphone charged, which ensures it has enough juice to install updates when necessary. Keep at least 30MB or more of the internal memory free at all times. If you get a low memory warning, that's a good indication that you need to start deleting some apps or backing up photos and videos to your PC.

Fix-It Checklist

It's helpful to have a few things on hand when your tablet won't start. Here's a short checklist that'll help you solve the problem.

- ✓ USB charging cable
- ✓ Power adapter
- ✓ Active Wi-Fi connection
- ✓ Tablet or smartphone owner's manual
- ✓ Dry non-abrasive screen-cleaning cloth
- ✓ Spare SD card or microSD card for compatible devices

Troubleshooting Reference: MONITORS



IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MUCH WORK you need to do or how capable your PC is, if your monitor is faltering or malfunctioning, then nothing gets done until the window into your PC gets fixed. Most monitor problems don't require professional service; you can address them yourself. Follow these basic troubleshooting tips to see clearly again.

The Monitor Screen Is Dark

First, check to make sure you've pressed the power button on the monitor, that the monitor is plugged into a working outlet, and that there is no on/off switch on the back of the monitor that has been switched to the Off position. If you see a lit LED

(commonly amber or yellow), but the screen is still dark, then it's possible that the monitor is not receiving a signal from the PC. Try pressing the Input or Source button (if present) multiple times to cycle through the various source types. Make sure the display cable is attached to the back of the monitor and the associated port on the PC tower. Tighten any loose connections. To ensure that the monitor is the problem and not the PC (or the graphics adapter in the PC), try plugging in a monitor that you know is working properly, making sure to use that monitor's cable. If it works, then try swapping cables. If none of the above work, you may need to replace your monitor or get it repaired.

Problems With Color, Brightness, Contrast, & More

If the contrast, brightness, sharpness or another setting on your monitor is affecting the display, then you should consult your monitor's user manual to determine how to access the OSD (On-Screen Display) menu. The manual should include instructions for adjusting color settings, contrast, brightness, and other settings. If fiddling with the OSD doesn't help, and you're seeing color distortion, check the ports on the monitor cable for bent pins. If you don't see any or can't repair them yourself, try a different monitor data cable. If the problem persists you may need to repair or replace the monitor. ●

Prevention

The best way to avoid problems is to perform some regular maintenance on your monitor. Because there are no moving parts on your monitor, dust and heat are going to be the focus of your preemptive attention. Use a can of compressed air to clear vents (while the monitor is off) and make sure the monitor is not exposed to direct sunlight or excessive temperatures.

Fix-It Checklist

It's helpful to have a few things on hand when your monitor is malfunctioning. Here's a short checklist that'll help you solve the problem.

- ✓ Power strip or surge protector plugged into a working outlet
- ✓ Can of compressed air to dust off vents
- ✓ Monitor user manual
- ✓ Spare monitor data and power cables
- ✓ Spare monitor

Troubleshooting Reference: **PRINTERS**



FOR MANY SMALL BUSINESSES, THE printer is a vital cog in the machine, so when it goes down, productivity suffers and some important work effectively stops. But before you call in a professional, try to fix the problem yourself. You can do it by following these simple troubleshooting tips.

When In Doubt, Check The LCD

Most printers feature some sort of LCD display that reports that status of ink cartridges, toner, and most importantly, any error messages you should be aware of. It's a good idea to periodically glance at the display, but make it your first stop if you run into problems. Often you'll find errors and

messages displayed here that give you specific instruction for how to solve the issue. Some common LCD messages include "drum error" (remove and replace the drum), "jam" (paper jam), and the self-explanatory "low ink" or "low toner."

Printer Fails To Print

If the printer stops printing, start by making sure the unit has power and is turned on. Allow enough time to pass to account for the warm up period (if your printer requires one). If the printer is new, make sure any packing material, tape, and protective plastic has been removed from the unit. Check that the drum, toner cartridge, or ink cartridges are in

their proper places and the compartments that provide access to the inner part of the printer are closed. Make sure there's plenty of printer paper in the tray(s).

If the printer is connected via USB or Ethernet, make sure the cable spanning the two devices is securely connected. If the printer is connected wirelessly, make sure it can detect the wireless network and that the printer and PCs on the network can communicate.

If your printer supports it, it might help to try an alternate connection method. For instance, connect a Wi-Fi-connected printer to your PC using a USB cable instead, and then retry the print operation. ●

Prevention

The best way to avoid problems is to perform some regular maintenance on your printer. Every time you replace the toner or ink, take a moment to inspect the unit, remove the paper trays, and wipe it down with a clean, dry cloth. Don't regularly exceed the recommended duty cycle for your printer. Replace the ink and toner cartridges exactly as described in the printer's manual and only use the ink, toner, and paper recommended for your device.

Fix-It Checklist

It's helpful to have a few things on hand when your printer goes on the fritz. Here's a short checklist that'll help you solve the problem.

- ✓ Printer's user manual
- ✓ USB cable
- ✓ Working Wi-Fi connection
- ✓ PC with an active Internet connection
- ✓ Driver disc that came with your printer
- ✓ Replacement ink or toner cartridge(s)
- ✓ Paper for printing test pages

Troubleshooting Reference: PROJECTORS



CHANCES ARE THAT YOUR PROJECTOR WILL work like a dream right up until the night before—or worse, the moment before—you give your big presentation. But don't cancel the meeting; follow these tips to get your projector back in working order.

Your Computer Goes To Sleep Mid-Presentation

Many notebooks are configured to go to sleep or shut off the screen to save energy, but this can interrupt your presentation. To fix it, right-click an open space on the Desktop, click Personalize, click Screen Saver, and then click the Change Power Settings hyperlink at the bottom of the dialog box. Click the radio button adjacent

to Balanced, click Change Plan Settings, and then set the Dim The Display, Turn Off The Display, and Put The Computer To Sleep options to Never.

Projector Is "Out Of Range"

When you see this message, it usually means that the resolution of your source (typically a notebook or PC) device is too high to display on the projector. Turn the projector off and turn your attention to the PC or notebook. Right-click an empty space on the Desktop and then click Screen Resolution. Click the Resolution drop-down, and drag the slider to match the projector's native resolution. Click Apply and OK to close the dialog box.

Image Fails To Appear On The Projector

Make sure the requisite cables are connected, the PC or notebook and projector are powered on, and that the projector has had sufficient time to warm up. Set the projector to the proper source by pressing the Source or Input button.

Another possible way to pinpoint the problem is to right-click an empty space on the Desktop and then click Screen Resolution. Next, click the Connect To A Projector hyperlink. Your options are Disconnect Projector, Duplicate, Extend, and Projector Only. Click one of the latter three to enable the image on the Projector. ●

Prevention

The best way to avoid problems is to perform regular maintenance on your projector. Be sure operate your projector within the minimum and maximum temperature and humidity ranges. Excesses can reduce the lifespan of the projector lamp, leading to overheating. Run the projector at less than its peak brightness to extend the lamp life. If your projector supports it, use Eco Mode. Avoid unplugging the projector immediately after the presentation, to give the fan long enough to cool the lamp down.

Fix-It Checklist

It's helpful to have a few things on hand when your projector is acting up. Here's a short checklist that'll help you solve the problem.

- ✓ Spare video cables
- ✓ Spare video cables
- ✓ Lens-cleaning cloth
- ✓ Another PC with an active Internet connection
- ✓ Can of compressed air
- ✓ Projector's user manual
- ✓ Spare projector lamp

Troubleshooting Reference:

INTERNET CONNECTION



THE INTERNET IS THE LIFEblood OF THE modern computing experience. Without it, your software remains static, unpatched, and vulnerable; you can't communicate, or transfer files; nor can you contact remote customers, clients, and coworkers. But before you give up and move to the shores of Walden Pond, try these troubleshooting tips to get back online.

Can't Load A Web Page

There can be many causes for a faulty Internet connection. Start by launching your browser, typing www.microsoft.com into the address bar, and pressing ENTER. You can also navigate to other known sites: If those sites load properly, then the site that failed

to display may be temporarily offline, so just try back later.

Next launch the Network Diagnostics tool. The easiest way to do this is to launch Internet Explorer and click the Diagnose Connection Problems button when it fails to bring up your home page.

If the problem persists, reset your modem and router. Start by removing the power plugs from the back sides both devices. Next, plug in the modem and wait for the lights to come on (typically ten to twenty seconds), then plug in the router. Some modems have battery back-ups, so you may need to reset yours by pressing a recessed button on the unit. Make sure all Ethernet

cables between your PC, modem, and router are secure, and then relaunch your browser to see if the problem is fixed.

If not, delete your browsing history. In Internet Explorer, click Tools (press ALT if you don't see the Menu bar), click Delete Browsing History, and then click the Delete buttons for Temporary Internet Files, History, and Form Data.

You can determine if the malfunction is due to a faulty add-on by running Internet Explorer without add-ons. Click Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and then click Internet Explorer (No Add-ons). Not running IE? Other browsers should offer similar functionality. ●

Prevention

The best way to avoid problems with your Internet connection is to keep up with updates to your operating system and internet browsers. Click Start, Control Panel, System And Security, Windows Update, and then click Check For Updates from the left pane.

Fix-It Checklist

It's helpful to have a few things on hand when your Internet connection stops working. Here's a short checklist that'll help you solve the problem.

- ✓ A spare computer on your network
- ✓ Manuals for your router and modem
- ✓ Spare Ethernet cables
- ✓ Phone number for your Internet service provider
- ✓ Phone

SMART COMPUTING DICTIONARY

Silicon Valley has long been notorious for churning out jargon along with its electronics, and it isn't showing any signs of slowing. With the rise of each new trend, more tech terms find their way into our day-to-day vocabulary. Right now, social media is the chief jargon offender. Tomorrow—who knows? One thing is for certain: *Smart Computing's* dictionary has plain-English definitions that will keep you up to speed.



Wikipedia is a popular wiki that has received worldwide input from volunteers. The online encyclopedia is free to use and can be edited by anyone.

wiki • A wiki is a website (created with wiki software) that is maintained by an online community. A well-known example of a wiki is Wikipedia (wikipedia.org), the online encyclopedia that receives entries daily from users around the world. Some wikis are designed to be used by the public, while others are created for corporate use. Personal wikis also exist.

blogroll • A list of links to websites (and other blogs) that relate to the blog on which the list appears. For example, the blogroll on a blog that covers small business news might feature links to local Small Business Development Centers and blogs that the author deems noteworthy.

direct message • In Twitter, a direct message is a private message that you send to a specific user. It isn't shared with your followers.

handle • Your username is often referred to as a "handle" by social media users. Any name for your profile, visible by members of the social network, is your handle. These days, it's typical for users to choose their real names for their handles. In fact, some networks (including Facebook) don't allow users to create names that are not their real names.

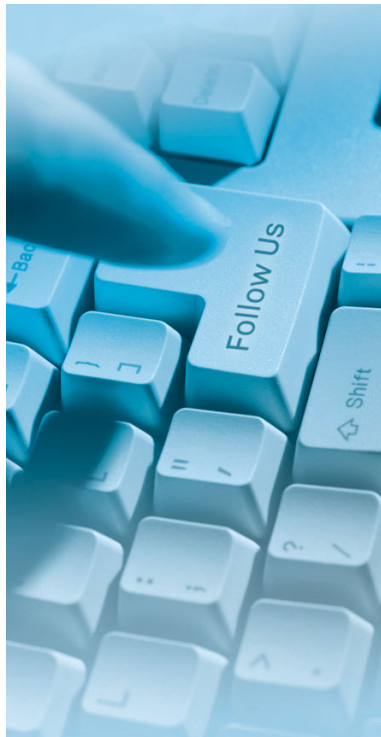
hashtag • A hashtag (#) is used in Twitter (and sometimes on other social media sites) to designate a keyword. It's meant to help people (who are searching for posts on the same topic) to find your post. For example, you might put a hashtag in front of "computer" (#computer) when you tweet about repairing your business's workstation. People searching for #computer will see your tweet.

meme • An Internet meme is an image, phrase, or video that not only goes viral, but is adopted by users across the Internet. An example is the lolcat: an image of a cat, along with a caption that is supposedly written by the cat. Public relations teams sometimes attempt to create Internet memes that feature certain products.

permalink • Short for “permanent link,” a permalink is a URL (uniform resource locator) that isn’t expected to change. You may encounter a permalink when you are reading a news piece on a website’s main page, for example. The main page will replace that piece with new content soon, so you’ll want to follow the permalink and bookmark that link if you intend to return to it.

profile • In social networks, your profile is your presence on the network. Many social networks have a profile page that includes a biography, images of you, and any other information you’d like to share. Keep this sharing in mind as you fill out such profiles; many profiles give you the opportunity to provide personal contact information. Sharing that sort of information with the public can lead to spam and junk mail.

retweet • If you see a tweet (a Twitter post) that you would like to share with your followers, you can retweet it. When you retweet, a small retweet



Follow • Many social networks and related services have one-click buttons that let you associate yourself with a particular person or other entity. Generally, clicking the button opens access to that person’s posts. In Twitter, the Follow button lets you add a person’s tweets to your feed. Once you click the button, you are considered a follower of that person. Many people and groups track the number of followers they accumulate, often for marketing purposes. “Follow Us” buttons are common on company and organization websites.

icon will appear at the bottom of the post, along with your username. Some users add “RT” to retweets to make it clear that the post is a retweet. The “RT” acts as symbol rather than a command; you don’t need to use it to retweet. You can click the Retweet icon in Twitter to retweet a message.

webinar • An online seminar. Such Web conferences are often interactive: The person giving the seminar can receive live input from the people in virtual attendance. Webcasts, on the other hand, are generally one-way presentations.

@username • In Twitter, the commercial “at” symbol (@) goes in front of a person’s username to create a link to the person’s profile page. Many tweets will include multiple @usernames to call out friends, co-workers, customers, prize winners, and other Twitter users.

#followfriday • This Twitter hashtag is used by people who want to recommend (to everyone) a particular twitter user. If you want to recommend that your colleagues follow a Twitter user, type a message that contains #followfriday (or #FF) and @username. As you might have guessed, many users write #followfriday tweets on Friday.

Can’t find the term you’re looking for in this month’s list? Find thousands more definitions in *Smart Computing’s* dictionary at www.smartcomputing.com. To see a term appear in these pages, email editor@smartcomputing.com.

The Tech Info You Need, In Plain English

You don't need to be an IT guru to buy and maintain computers and gadgets for your home or small office. *Smart Computing* keeps you up-to-date with plain-English articles that explain new technology and define technical terms. Each issue includes news, tutorials, and step-by-step troubleshooting guides.

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